New Gear from Gewa, Doc Sweeney, Tama, and Roland

MODERN DRUMMER®

CONSEQUENCE MEDIA

THE WORLD'S #1 DRUM RESOURCE SINCE 1977

Pat Petrillo

Big Rhythm

Mastodon's
Modern Metal Master
Brann Dailor

Paramore's
Zac Farro

Double Bass Lessons from
Bobby Rondinelli and Joe Franco

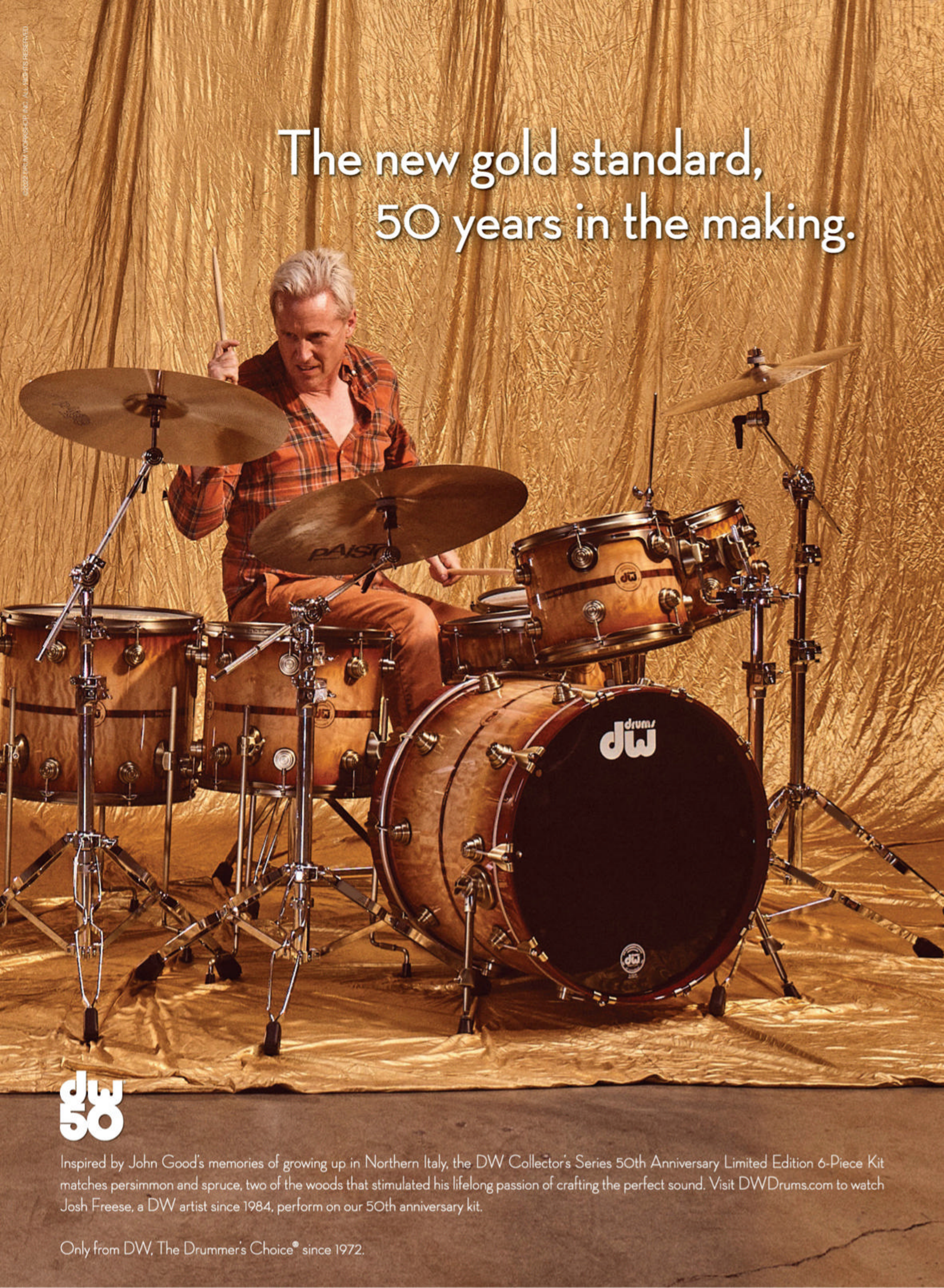
Learn from:
Peter Erskine • Jonathan Joseph
Ron Spagnardi • Chris Lesso • Joe Morello

February 2023

MODERNDRUMMER.COM $9.99
02

VISIT…

LANZAROTE
Caliente.com


The new gold standard,
50 years in the making.
PAiSTe
dw
drums
dw
dw
50

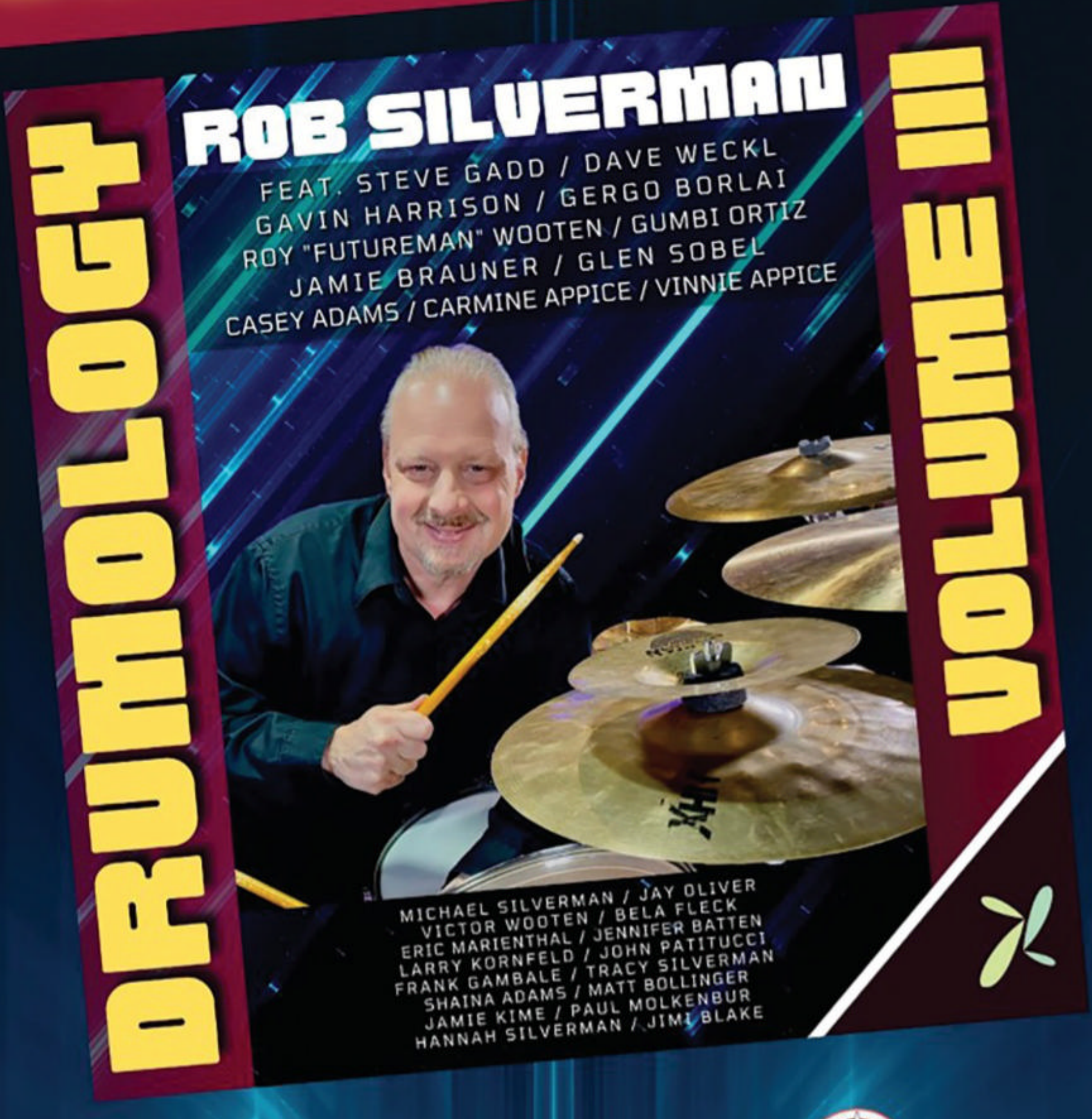
Inspired by John Good's memories of growing up in Northern Italy, the DW Collector's Series 50th Anniversary Limited Edition 6-Piece Kit matches persimmon and spruce, two of the woods that stimulated his lifelong passion of crafting the perfect sound. Visit DWDrums.com to watch Josh Freese, a DW artist since 1984, perform on our 50th anniversary kit.

Only from DW, The Drummer's Choice® since 1972.

©2022 DRUM WORKSHOP, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

STREAMING EVERYWHERE NOW!

ROB SILVERMAN:
DRUMOLOGY III


ROB SILVERMAN
FEAT. STEVE GADD / DAVE WECKL
GAVIN HARRISON / GERGO BORLAI
ROY "FUTUREMAN" WOOTEN / GUMBI ORTIZ
JAMIE BRAUNER / GLEN SOBEL
CASEY ADAMS / CARMINE APPICE / VINNIE APPICE
DRUMOLOGY
VOLUME III
MICHAEL SILVERMAN / JAY OLIVER
VICTOR WOOTEN / BELA FLECK
ERIC MARIENTHAL / JENNIFER BATTEN
LARRY KORNFELD / JOHN PATITUCCI
FRANK GAMBALE / TRACY SILVERMAN
SHAINA ADAMS / MATT BOLLINGER
JAMIE KIME / PAUL MOLKENBUR
HANNAH SILVERMAN / JIMI BLAKE

ROB SILVERMAN PLAYS
YAMAHA DRUMS
EXCLUSIVELY

YAMAHA

CHECK OUT DRUMOLOGY
VOL. I AND VOL. II ON
AUTUMNHILLRECORDS.COM

ROB SILVERMAN
drumology
DRUMOLOGY
VOLUME II

autumnhill
records

CONTENTS

Zildjian
VIC FIRTH
Ludwig

16 PAT PETRILLO

Pat talks about his Big Rhythm Band, and their two releases The Abbey Road Sessions, and the new Power Station Sessions. He also details his long career and influences as a drummer on the New Jersey, Philadelphia, and New York music scenes.

By Mark Griffith

28 ZAC FARRO

Zac discusses coming up as a drummer, taking lessons, and improving. Zac tells us about his return to Paramore and their exciting new record. He reveals why he left the band, and why he has returned, and what is on the horizon for Paramore.

By Danny Laverde

36 BRANN DAILOR

Brann takes us through his evolution as a drummer and a singer, his many musical and drumming influences, and the many bands that he has played in along the way to becoming Mastodon's modern metal master that he is today.

By Mark Griffith

44 MARK KELSO

Canadian drummer Mark Kelso has played with everyone from Gino Vanelli to Pat Metheny. Mark and Robert Girouard talk about Mark's career, his band The Jazz Exiles, and their new recording The Dragon's Tail.

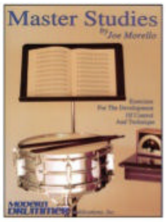
By Robert Girouard

Volume 47 • Number 2
Cover photo by Lloyd Bishop
Cover inset photos:
Brann Dailor by Jimmy Hubbard
Zac Farro by Alex Kluft
Contents photo by Carly Vena

LESSONS

48 BASICS

The Four Practice Pockets and taking advantage of your intuition in creating an adaptive and fluid practice model.



52 STLYE & ANALYSIS

A transcription of Pat Petrillo's solo on "Runnin'" from his new record The Power Station Sessions.

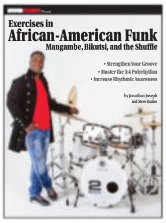
54 JAZZ DRUMMERS WORKSHOP

Joe Morello's explanation about his creative exercise in developing dynamic control.

doublebass drumming

56 ROCK AND JAZZ CLINIC

Joe Franco takes us down the road of playing triplets and accents over the double bass roll.


Exercises in African-American Funk
Mangambe, Bikutsi, and the Shuffle

62 FUNK FUNDAMENTALS

Jonathan Joseph addresses the six-against-four polyrhythm from his book Exercises in African American Funk.

DOUBLE BASS DRUMMING
REVISED EDITION

65 DRUM CHANNEL

Pat Petrillo explains some classic Earl Palmer and Ringo Starr grooves.

Understanding
The Language Of Music

66 ROCK PERSPECTIVES

Bobby Rondinelli talks to us about warm-ups, beats, and fills that incorporate playing two sixteenth nots on the bass drums.

70 TEACHERS FORUM

Modern Drummer founder Ron Spagnardi teaches us about Understanding the Language of Music.

EQUIPMENT

10 NEW AND NOTABLE

Modern Drummer brings you the hottest and newest gear from Tama and Roland.

12 PRODUCT CLOSE UP

Reviews of the Gewa G3 electronic set and Doc Sweeney's new Hollocore Snare Drum.

DEPARTMENTS

4 EDITORS OVERVIEW

Mark Griffith talks about the theme of persistence in this month's issue.

6 KIT OF THE MONTH

8 JAZZ INSIGHTS

Peter Erskine talks about the art and challenges of teaching as he contemplates "hanging up the sticks."

74 COLLECTORS CORNER

The story behind Humble Pie drummer Jerry Shirley's Roses Kit.

76 OUT NOW

Peter Dawn talks about his new book Phil Seamen: Percussion Genius, Legendary Rebel, and Born Raver.

80 EYE CANDY

Louie Bellson and Sammy Davis Jr's 1960s Gold Rogers kit.

AN EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

Persistence

As I read this month's *Modern Drummer*, I see a common theme, persistence. Unfortunately, as I look around the musical world (and the world in general,) I see less and less of it. There seems to be a lot of "one and done" artists, drummers, and people (in general) around today. I see the phrase, "I *took* my shot," "I *tried*," and "I *made* the best of it," too much. Drumming, the music business, and life is hard.

Immediate Gratification seems to rule the day, but that kind of success is very fleeting. Hence the past tense words like "took," "tried," and "made" being used. Success comes from persistence, living in the present, being present, looking and pushing forward.

When I look at successful drummers like Pat Petrillo, Brann Dailor, Zac Farro, Mark Kelso, Phil Seamen, and Peter Erskine; I see persistence, I *feel* them pushing forward. Chipping away, looking at the long term, facing (perceived) failure as just another obstacle to overcome, and the absolute drive to overcome the bumps in the road to move forward. That's what they do and did.

Pat Petrillo has been on the music scene for over 30 (!!!) years, he waited for years to release his recent solo records, and this is his *first* appearance on the cover of *Modern Drummer*. When you read Brann Dailor's interview, you'll see that he has been in more bands (*that didn't work out*) than I can even remember. Mastodon is *far* from his *first time around the block*. Zac Farro *left* Paramore when he wasn't happy, but now he has *returned* to continue in his band's success. Mark Kelso doesn't live in the music capital of Los Angeles or New York, but that hasn't stopped his career. He has played on a lot of successful records, and he has put together a band of world class Canadian musicians and released three recordings with his band The Jazz Exiles. Phil Seamen had the persistence to find his way in the music scene of post war England. He became a leading voice in modern British Jazz, pioneering a new style of music, and a new way to play the drums. Now there is a facinating new book that tells his story. Finally, although Peter Erskine *ponders* retirement and hanging up the sticks in this month's Jazz Insights column, he is pondering this after over 50 (!!!) years as a professional drummer.

In sports, they say to "keep pounding away" to win a game. While I don't like the thought of "pounding" the drums, the saying seems more than applicable to what we are doing as drummers and musicians.

Mark Griffith
Editor-in-Chief & Director of Content

@ModernDrummer   modern_drummer   @modern_drummer

MODERN DRUMMER

Founder Ronald Spagnardi 1943–2003
Co-Founder Isabel Spagnardi

Publisher/CEO **David Frangioni**
CFO **Carolina Frangioni**
CTO **Jason Mehler**
Senior Art Director **Scott Bienstock**
Content Director **Mark Griffith**
Editorial **Daniel "Ziggy" Laverde**
Contributing Editor & Photographer **Alex Kluft**
Digital Marketing Manager **Ricardo Rodriguez**
Worldwide Education **Dom Famularo**
Live Fom My Drum Room Podcast **John DeChristopher**
Photography & Archivist **Felipe Laverde**
Videographer **Tyson Francion**

CONSEQUENCE MEDIA

CEO **Sajan Shiva**
President **Rick Catinella**
Publisher **Alex Young**

THE MD PRO PANEL/ADVISORY BOARD: Chris Adler, Carmine Appice, Kenny Aronoff, Bill Bachman, Eddie Bayers, Gregg Bissonette, Jason Bittner, Bill Bruford, Will Calhoun,Terri Lyne Carrington, Matt Chamberlain, Peter Erskine, Dom Famularo, Daniel Glass, Alex González, Danny Gottlieb, Benny Greb, Matt Halpern, Horacio Hernandez, Gerald Heyward, Taku Hirano, Jonathan Joseph, Jim Keltner, Paul Leim, Peter Magadini, Pat Mastelotto, Rod Morgenstein, Andy Newmark, Carl Palmer, Stephen Perkins, Dafnis Prieto, Rich Redmond, Brian Reitzell, Jim Riley, Bobby Rondinelli, Antonio Sánchez, Cindy Blackman Santana, Chad Smith, Steve Smith, Todd Sucherman, Billy Ward, Kenny Washington, Dave Weckl, Paul Wertico, Dennis Wolfe

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Donn Bennett, Clayton Cameron, Bob Campbell, Peter Erskine, Dom Famularo, Bob Girouard, Mike Haid, Brian Hill, Daru Jones, Nic Kubes, Chris Lesso, Peter Magadini, James Petercsak, Tony Verderosa

MODERN DRUMMER magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published digitally monthly and print bi-monthly by ***MODERN DRUMMER*** Publications, Inc., 1279 W. Palmetto Park Rd PO Box 276064 Boca Raton, FL 33427. PERIODICALS MAIL POSTAGE paid at Boca Raton, FL 33427 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2023 by MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:
MODERN DRUMMER Publications, 1279 W. Palmetto Park Rd PO Box 276064
Boca Raton, FL 33427.
Email: info@moderndrummer.com.

MODERN DRUMMER welcomes manuscripts and photos but cannot assume responsibility for them.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: Modern Drummer, 1279 W. Palmetto Park Rd, PO Box 276064, Boca Raton, FL 33427. Change of address: Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address and send to info@moderndrummer.com

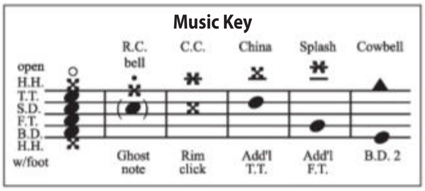
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Modern Drummer, 1279 W. Palmetto Park Rd PO Box 276064 Boca Raton, FL 33427.

Canadian Publications Mail Agreement No. 41480017 Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: PO Box 875, Stn A, Windsor ON N9A 6P2

MEMBER: National Association of Music Merchants, Percussive Arts Society

MEMBER: National Association of Music Merchants, Percussive Arts Society

Subscribe today at moderndrummer.com/subscribe
MODERN DRUMMER ONLINE: www.moderndrummer.com


Music Key

THE NEW GEWA G3
– BORN TO PLAY!

GEWA

Real Sounds

The GEWA G3 uses the same high-resolution sound samples as the GEWA G9 and G5 modules!

Real Feel

The GEWA G3 uses the same trigger technology as the GEWA G9 and GEWA G5 kits.
It offers 3-zone cymbals, all with a 360° playing surface – even for the Hi-Hat!

Real(ly) Simple

The GEWA G3 module is very simple to use.
Switch it on, complete the Setup Wizard,
and you're ready to play!

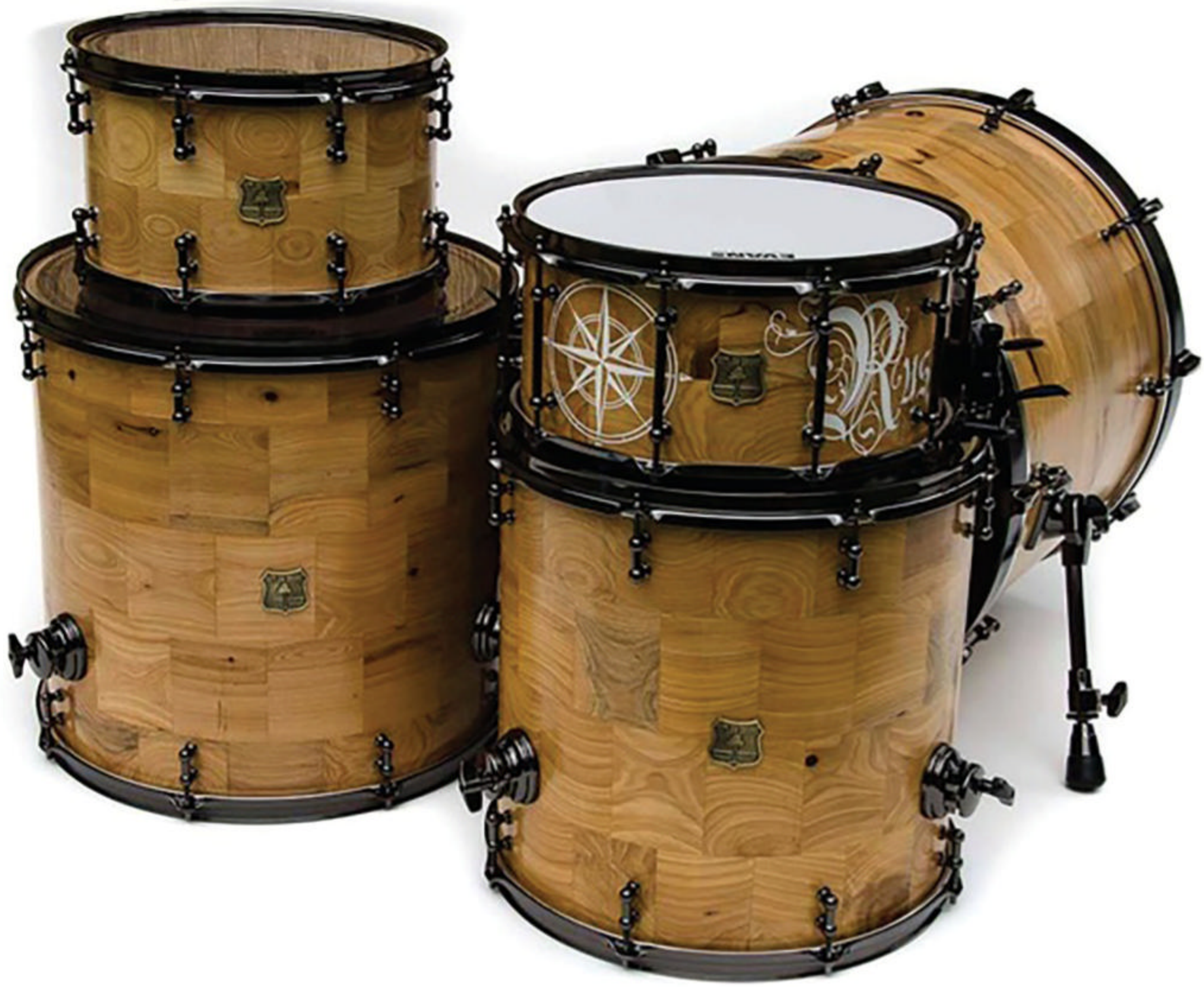
PLAY!!!

BORN TO

gewadigitaldrums
gewadigitaldrums
gewadigitaldrums
// gewadrums.com

GEWA music USA, Inc. | 8787 Snouffer School Road | Gaithersburg, MD 20879

AJ's Swampy Outlaw Kit



The most recent Kit of the Month comes to *Modern Drummer* from AJ Newton, who is the drummer for Nautical Rock Band Rusty Shipp based out of Nashville, TN. Michael explains, "Back in 2019 Michael Outlaw of Outlaw Drums built me a Cypress swamp wood drum kit. We had numerous discussions about the style of grungy surf rock music that Rusty Shipp plays. Therfore Michael thought, *'What's more perfect for a grungy surf rock band than Cypress wood that was drug out of the Okefenokee swamp over 80 years ago?'* The wood had been in Michael's family since his grandfather had it, he trusted me with the wood, and was happy that it would see a second lease on life as a custom drum kit.

The set is a work of art. It's a beautiful segmented wood kit that I get compliments on everywhere I go. I enjoy telling the unique story of the set (and the wood) over and over again. The drums have a huge tuning range and are an absolute joy to sit behind every time I perform. The dimensions are a 7x14" snare, 9x13" rack tom, 16"x16" floor tom, 18"x18" floor tom and an 18x22" kick drum."

Ludwig

PAT PETRILLO LEGACY MAHOGANY

THE
POWER
STATION
SESSIONS
The Pat Petrillo Big Rhythm Band
Featuring
Nile Rodgers • John Popper • Oz Noy
Lenny Pickett • Felicia Collins • Glen Burtnik

Hear them on the new record

BIG SOUND. BIG RHYTHM

Legacy series drums by Ludwig deliver the vintage sound trusted by professionals for over 100 years. From the stage to the studio, this is the innovative sound that hits the rhythm just right.

The Art & Challenge of Teaching

By Peter Erskine

I am writing this on the last day of 2022, in preparation for my last semester of teaching full-time at the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California. Why am I leaving such a coveted job?

The generous-sounding answer would be that I want to make room for someone younger to enjoy this position and opportunity. And, by doing so, I am ensuring that my students enjoy some fresh information. In fact, this is only part of the reason. The selfish-sounding answer and larger part of the reason is that I miss having days after days of free time (which only happened between tours back in the day, and back before I started a family.) We can dream right? Actually, I'm tired. Yes, I'm tired, but I am a professional. And so, if my contract with the universe as well as the university is to teach, then teach I must and teach I will!

Peter playing drums at summer jazz camp

I am writing this in the city of San Francisco. I flew here yesterday in preparation for rehearsals with the San Francisco Symphony. I met my dear old friend Jack Fletcher for dinner last night in Jack and Ellen's vintage-holiday-decorations-festooned home. The cuisine? Take-out Chinese, of course. And, like with any good meal, we talked after we had finished dining, drinking only bottled water as the hours ticked by. We covered a lot of ground while we hydrated. And because we know each other so well, it was very easy for some deep-seated truths to make their way to the surface of our conversation. And lo and behold, I heard myself saying, "I think what I'm sensing more and more is this. Because I was taken to that jazz summer camp in 1961 (when I was seven years old while the other students were all 10 years older than me.) And because I went on the road just after I turned eighteen (with a band where most everyone else was at least ten, if not twenty or thirty years older than me.) And because I joined Weather Report when I had just turned 24 years old… All of this time, without consciously realizing it, I was missing my youth."

Jack Fletcher

And I know that this is what's known as a "first world problem." Today there are actual children who are having their youth (if not their lives) ripped away from them. Therefore, just to be clear, I am not looking for sympathy here. I am trying to unlock a source of sadness and fatigue that I have been feeling as both an artist and as a human being. I actually mentioned in a follow-up text to Jack this morning that, for the first time in my life, I was contemplating hanging up my sticks.

The phone rang in no time after that. It was Jack.

"Hey, man … this is not a black and white, all or nothing at all issue, okay?" Now, I'm paraphrasing because his advice came quick, and I was only able to type some notes with my right hand while I was speaking with Jack. He advised me to begin taking free-associative notes to document the thoughts or places where my soul-spirit was going. Because Jack is an incredibly effective and highly regarded drama teacher, he mentioned a theatrical term of art and instruction that has complete relevance to music-making, called "imitation of action." This is especially appropriate at the drums because of the physical nature of what we do. Imitation of action is a non-organic repetition or attempt to play LIKE something or someone. As opposed to playing what that ideal or person played, because of an actual REASON.

We preach listening as the way to learn the language and the vocabulary. Listening is the perfect food for inspiration and information. But what about the REASON that something gets played? Sometimes this can only be determined by being at the instrument, on the bandstand, in the studio, and by making the wrong choices when it comes to what to play.

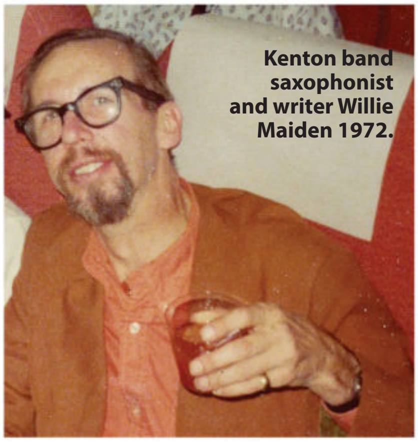
I value subjective and experiential-

Weather Report 1978.

oriented teaching. It is the kind of instruction where the teacher tells a story that may (or may not) seem to have particular relevance to the technique required in the situation. However, it's natural for me to question whether such a teaching method is effective and even selfish. Although that's the way I have been teaching for the past forty years! But I wondered aloud to Jack, "Am I teaching the same thing to all of my students at the same time? His reply was very interesting, "The lessons are always the same. The lessons are ALWAYS the same."

And I realized, yes there are universal truths that (not only) bear repeating but need repeating. And the fuel that drives much of my anecdotal approach to instruction is this: I need to relay these experiences to students because many of those circumstances do not exist now for them. Not to mention the fact that many of jazz legends and characters who taught me (in one way or the other,) are no longer with us.

Willie Maiden: "You must take time, to make time, in order to learn how to PLAY time."
Shelly Manne: "Remember: there's no 2 + 4 without 1 + 3."
Joe Zawinul: "One? Forget one, man. One's not important!" Followed a few days later by, "You should play more downbeats, man."
Jaco Pastorius: "Stop thinking so much. Just concentrate!"
Michael Brecker: "I never heard someone who, on one hand can sound so great, and then on the other hand sound so bad …" (said to me, about me.)
Manfred Eicher: "You're not listening. Just listen … then everything will be okay."
Vince Mendoza: "The eraser is the most important part of the pencil."
Steve Gadd: "Never pet a burning dog." (I read this in an interview, Steve didn't actually say this to me … but I've always remembered it.)
John Williams: "Peter, didn't you just love Shelly (Manne)? But he DID like to call attention to himself … wouldn't you agree?" (Got the note, John … thanks.)



Kenton band saxophonist and writer Willie Maiden 1972.

And now, while trying to catalog the advice I've been given over the years, I recall the admonishment and musical direction given to me on my first two jobs as a "casual" gigging drummer in the resort town of Atlantic City, New Jersey when I was all of fourteen years old. The first came from a pianist who I was playing in duo with at a country club. He turned around from the keyboard and snarled in his best 1940s noir/gangster voice, "Listen, kid: I said PLAY BOOM-CHIK, AND KEEP IT THAT WAY!" Which I now realize is pretty good advice. The second and more kind advice came from an accordionist and bandleader who also owned the local music store in town. His name was Jack Louis. I don't know the name he came from Europe with, but I remember the tattooed number on his forearm that marked him as a survivor of Auschwitz. Jack Louis worked nights and weekends as a bandleader, and he gave me one of my first jobs. I had no cases for my drumset and I was not old enough to drive. My brother Fred volunteered to take me to the gig, but we left home too late, and the weekend traffic was really bad. I arrived at the hotel and eventually found the ballroom, carrying my drums with my brother's help. As one of us dragged the bag containing my hardware across the ballroom floor, the band was already playing up on the stage. I was really late, and I set up while the band was playing, eventually joining in. After the first set was finally and mercifully over, Mr. Louis provided me with a plaid band jacket to wear and motioned to me with his finger to come to the edge of the stage where an empty hardwood chair awaited my bottom.

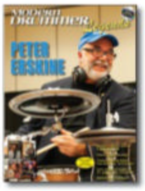
Peter's mother in 1961 encouraging a tired Peter to go to rehearsal.

Once I was seated, and once he made certain that he had my complete attention, the only thing I remember him telling me was this (in his lovely Eastern European accented voice,) "Peter, you must always be set-up and ready to go, fifteen minutes before downbeat."

That was all that he said, and that was all that he needed to say. And you know what? I've never been late to a gig since.

Thinking of Jack Louis and his kindness, and my eyes are tearing up now. How lucky I was to show up late so I could benefit from his gentle wisdom.

It's my favorite lesson. Always be set-up and ready to go, fifteen minutes before downbeat. And that's my lesson this month to all of you reading this. That will be my first lesson of the year for my students at USC, and I don't care if I've told the story to them before, they'll do well to hear it again.



Check out Peter's drummer profile page, and get a copy of his Legends book at moderndrummer.com

NEW *and* NOTABLE

ROLAND INSTRUMENTS FOR FIRST TIME DRUMMERS, AND EXAMINING THE PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE EFFECTS OF DRUMMING

Roland TD-02 V-Drum Series

The Roland TD-02K and TD-02KV V-Drums kits provide a premium musical experience for first-time drummers, practicing students, and adults looking to start playing drums again. The kits are based around the TD-02 module, which includes 16 ready-to-play kits and onboard Coach functions to help build and maintain skills. Drummers can use headphones for quiet home playing sessions and connect a smartphone to play along with their favorite songs. An optional Bluetooth adaptor adds wireless capabilities for streaming music from mobile devices and communicating with MIDI production apps. The TD-02K and TD-02KV offer a full array of drum and cymbal pads with sensitive playing surfaces to develop proper techniques. The upgraded TD-02KV kit includes a Roland mesh-head snare pad with a natural acoustic stick feel and rebound. The hi-hat and kick trigger pedals in both kits feature noise-reducing designs to minimize sound transfer in living spaces.

Blondie drummer Clem Burke and Roland examine the physical and cognitive effects of drumming

Roland announces its partnership with the Clem Burke Drumming Project (CBDP), aiming to expand the benefits of drumming to everyone through data-driven insights on its benefits to both physical and mental health.

In 2008, inspired by the drumming of legendary artist Clem Burke, scientists sought to uncover the physical demand of "live" drumming. Partnering with Burke, they conducted a series of experiments and studies, including Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans, ultimately discovering both groundbreaking physical and cognitive results.

Physical Benefits of Drumming

Through testing inspired by work with the England and Great Britain Boxing Teams, the CBDP found that high-level drummers can exert the same level of energy during a concert as a professional soccer player in a 90-minute match.

In addition, it has proven that drumming can increase the adult heart rate from 60 bpm to 200 bpm, as well as increase breaths per minute from 15 to 50 and produce sweat loss rates of up to 1 liter per hour, all of which demonstrate legitimate physical exercise associated with the activity, and the benefits don't stop there.

Cognitive Benefits of Drumming

On top of the physical exertion, the team uncovered impressive cognitive benefits from drumming. Through their data, CBDP discovered numerous changes in brain function while drumming that can aid with common cognitive development, in addition to that associated with brain injury and specific neurodiverse brain conditions.

These include changes to the Mirror Neuron System (MNS), the part of our brain that generates empathy, which could largely benefit those living with conditions such as autism.

Through drumming's unique ability to utilize all four limbs, which often work independently from one another, the brain is forced to adapt, leading to improved pathways between its regions. The CBDP's data showed that this ultimately creates improvements in motor control, movement coordination, working memory, response times, action planning and attentional control among drummers.

Looking Ahead

While this data demonstrates drumming's revolutionary effects on physical, mental, and emotional development, the CBDP's work is far from finished. The team, comprised of Professors Marcus Smith, Stephen Draper, Steve Williams, as well as Dr. Ruth Lowry and Clem Burke, in collaboration with Roland, is excited to continue research in order to expand the understanding of further effects and help to bring these health benefits to wider groups of people—even going as far as those living with movement disorders, or rehabilitating from strokes and brain injuries. **roland.com**

TAMA ANNOUNCES RELEASE OF NEW STAGESTAR SERIES KITS

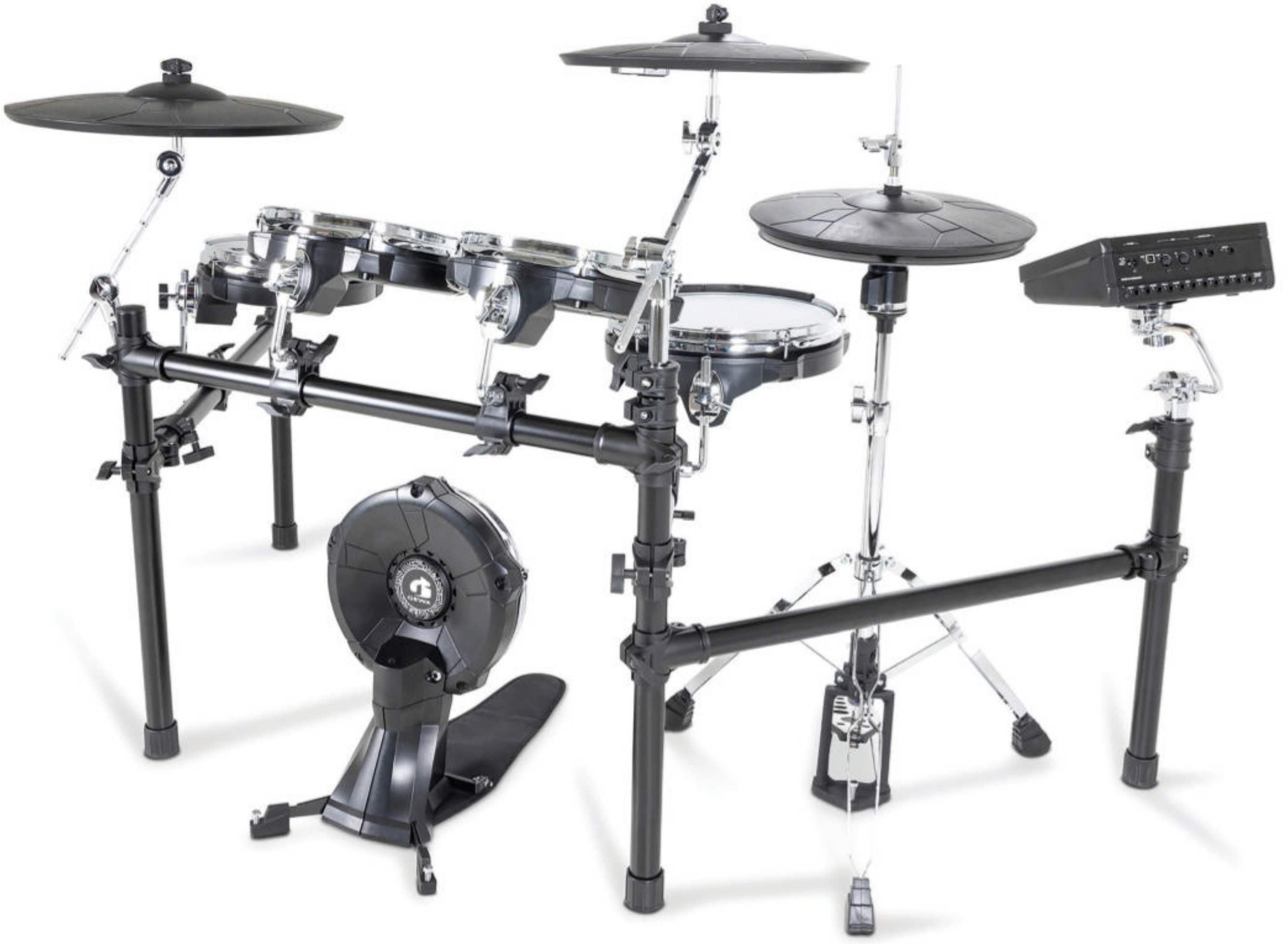
New for 2023, TAMA has announced the release of their new, super-affordable STAGESTAR drum kits. STAGESTAR provides a full sounding drum set with durable hardware and functional cymbals. 100% Poplar 6ply 7mm shells produce full, dynamic tones for each drum. Hardware stands feature double braced legs – Boom stand with multi-angle adjustments, snare stand with adjustable snare basket, and hi-hat stand with a strong clutch that holds tight. The bass drum pedal is equipped with separate spring tension and beater angle adjustments to provide customized pedal feel, according to player preference. The 14" hi-hat and 16" crash cymbals use thicker gauge brass than is common at this price point and provide increased volume and durability. Also included with this kit is a double-braced drum throne with spindle height adjustment. This design is more secure and easier to position up/down than is a fixed bolt height adjustment. The last feature that differentiates STAGESTAR is the TAMA Omnisphere Tom Holder. It incorporates a ball/socket tom arm design for flexible positioning and secure hold. Additionally, the L-arms do not penetrate the tom shells when connected, which allows the tom shell to resonate more freely than other conventional mounting systems. TAMA's STAGESTAR is the next generation of entry-level complete drum sets for the value-conscious consumer. It includes everything players need (except drumsticks) to get started on a full-sized drum set.

Features:
100% poplar Shell 6ply/7mm
Omnisphere Tom Holder
STAGESTAR Brass Cymbal Set
Drum Pedal & Drum Throne
Finishes: Black Night Sparkle, Cosmic Silver Sparkle, Lime Green Sparkle, Sea Blue Mist

What is included in the ST52H5C package
Drums: 22"x16", 10"x8", 12"x9", 16"x15", 14"x5.5"
Hardware: double tom holder, hi-hat stand, single drum pedal, snare stand, boom cymbal stand, drum throne
LIST: $1,100.00
tama.com

GEWA G3 Studio Electronic Drum Kit

By Jason Mehler



German musical instrument manufacturer GEWA was founded in 1925 in a region known for its rich musical history. In 2020, GEWA began developing digital drums as part of their drum division. The subject of this month's product closeup is the GEWA G3 electronic drum kit. The company's intention for the G3 is to provide a quality e-drum kit with high-end features & sounds at an affordable price point. Did they accomplish this? I think so. Let's dig in.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

The G3 Studio is a 5-piece kit that includes the G3 drum module, a 10" kick drum pad, three 10" tom pads, and a 12" snare pad. For the cymbals there is a 14" crash pad, 18" ride and a 14" hi-hat pad with a controller as the bottom hat trigger. Aside from the bass drum pad and the included double-braced hi-hat stand, everything mounts to the GEWA studio rack. The rack includes two sturdy boom stands for the cymbals and a curved mount for the G3 drum module. I believe I was provided the rack for the G3 Studio 5 (next model up) because my rack had an extra boom stand. I'm not sure if that was by mistake but it provided a nice place to hang my headphones.

HARDWARE SETUP

Rack

The setup of the GEWA rack took a while, mainly because I was being stubborn and tried to figure it out without following the provided instructions. There are multiple tubes at various lengths, some requiring rubber feet, endcaps or clamps to mount the cymbal arms. Additionally, the clamps that mount the toms and connect the extensions need to be slid onto the tubes prior to placing any endcaps. I found my self backtracking several times. The good news for fellow left-handed drummers is that everything can mount great in reverse, unlike the minor issues I've run into with comparable e-drum kits.

Pads and Cables

The drum pads mounted easily on the rack except for the kick drum pad, which is a well-designed, standalone unit. It features a large Velcro mat that lays under the bass drum pedal and is highly effective at securing the unit in place. The G3 does not include a pedal or drum throne.

The cables are numbered rather than labeled with the instrument names, which may annoy some people, but I found it similar to working with mics and numbered interfaces. On each cymbal there are two TRS jacks, one of which is for connecting to non-GEWA modules. I mistakenly connected to the wrong jack and had to switch when testing the sound module. When all was said and done, I was able to mount, position and wire everything with minimal effort.

PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Once the GEWA G3 module is powered on, you are taken through a simple setup wizard where you calibrate the hi hat. Basically, you close the hi hat, press a button, open the hi-hat, press the button again and then save. I struggled to get this right at first, and the resulting sound and performance was sub-optimal. However, I started over, unplugging and re-plugging the hi hat triggers and re-calibrating. It worked the second time around and I was pleasantly surprised by the realistic sound and feel. It instantly became fun to play.

Like comparable e-drum kits, the pad volume, sensitivity, and response are pretty good right out of the box. The sampled instrument sounds are high-resolution multi-layered samples, recorded in the Berlin Funkhaus studios and are the same exact samples used in their flagship G9 series kit. The sounds are really nice, and this is where the G3 truly stands out relative to other kits in it's price point.

One thing that was obvious when first testing the kit was the presence of crosstalk (e.g. ride cymbal would produce sound when hitting the floor tom etc.) due to vibrations traveling through the rack system. A little bit of crosstalk doesn't bother me, depending on which instruments are being triggered. However, It was a bit much. Therefore I adjusted the X-Talk settings within the sound module and was able to get it under control.

Another thing that was fun to tweak was the cross-stick settings of the snare. There is a setting called X-Fade where, depending on the velocity of the hit, will either play a rim click or a rim shot. I played with that setting for a bit until I found a comfortable spot to transition.

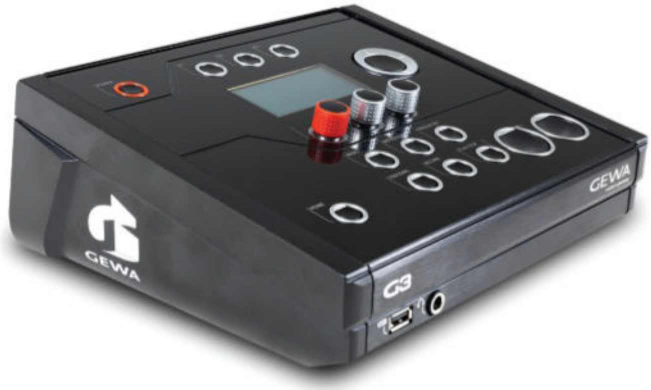
Let's talk about the rim triggers. For GEWA pads, the entire metal rim is a trigger, however GEWA provides a moveable hard rubber attachment that you are supposed to place where you feel most comfortable hitting the rim. The online consensus about this attachment is that it's too small and limits where you can hit the rim. Personally, it doesn't bother me on the toms, but doesn't feel so great on the snare. I like the snare better with the attachment removed.

The cymbal pads feel nice to play and I really love the large bell on the ride. The three trigger zones on the cymbals are advertised as 360 degrees, however I did notice some variations in the response when moving around the cymbal. This is not a deal-breaker, you just need to learn where the sweet spots are, similar to a traditional cymbal.

WORKING WITH THE G3 SOUND MODULE

The G3 sound module boasts a sleek, minimalist design with a few large backlit buttons and dials for easy navigation. It takes a bit of repetition to become familiar with the controls, but once you understand how the buttons and dials correspond to the icons on the screen, navigating the onscreen menu is a breeze. The menu structure and features are user-friendly and straightforward, making it easy to get the hang of the module.

The back panel of the G3 module features nine trigger inputs (two for the hi-hat) and two auxiliary inputs. As for outputs, the G3 has a left and right master output on the back panel and a stereo headphone jack on the front. The module also has Bluetooth connectivity for audio and MIDI, allowing you to stream music or use smartphone apps, as well as the ability to load up to 100 user WAV samples. The module includes a quick record function for real-time WAV recording, and each sound(s) has its own compressor and 3-band parametric EQ for further sound customization. The outputs also have a compressor and four-band EQ for shaping the overall sound. In addition, the module has four effect banks with a variety of reverb and multi-effect options, as well as traditional MIDI and USB connectivity for use with VST plugins.



I found the G3 very easy to navigate and dial up a specific preset. I haven't picked a favorite preset drum set yet, but I'm leaning towards the Jazz Kit. However, there are several kits that I could get stuck on as favorites.

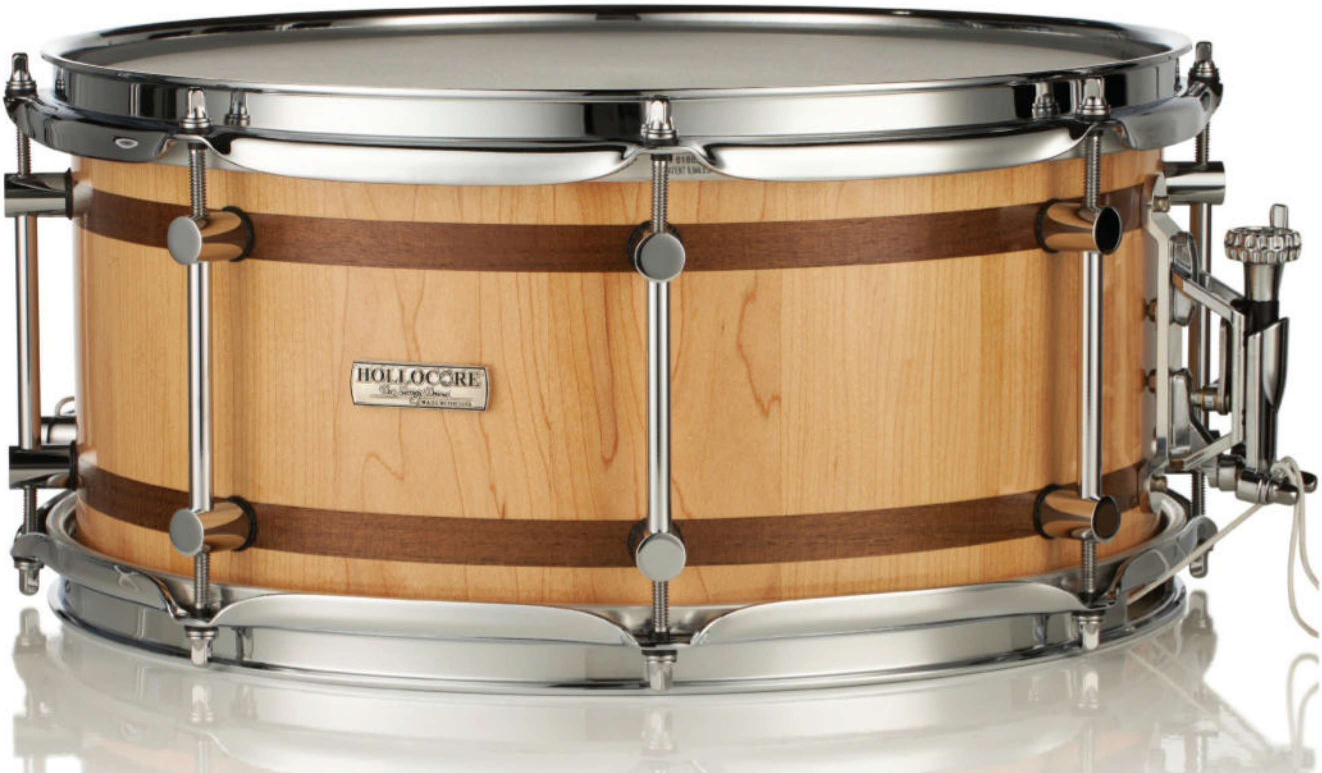
IN CONCLUSION

Overall, I enjoyed testing and playing the GEWA G3 Studio kit. While there were a few initial adjustments that needed to be made, I was able to overcome any issues and enjoy playing the kit. Retailing at $1,899, the GEWA G3 is definitely a strong contender in the electronic drum market and well worth considering for those in the market for a new electronic drum kit
gewamusicusa.com

Doc Sweeney's Hollocore Snare Drum

A Resonating New Twist on Shell Construction

By Brian Hill



The guys over at Doc Sweeney Drums are well known for putting together a high-quality product. They are also known for having no fear when it comes to thinking "outside the box." A lot of people like to throw that phrase around, but I think it really applies here. I received a brand new Hollocore Maple Snare Drum to try out and I was immediately intrigued.

Steve Stecher, the lead drum guru and a founding member at Doc Sweeney Drums, wanted to design a drum with serious built-in lows, and a fat punchy sound that had power and musical significance. A great deal of effort was put into Doc Sweeney's R&D and the testing process sounded exhausting. This process led them to explore every avenue possible.

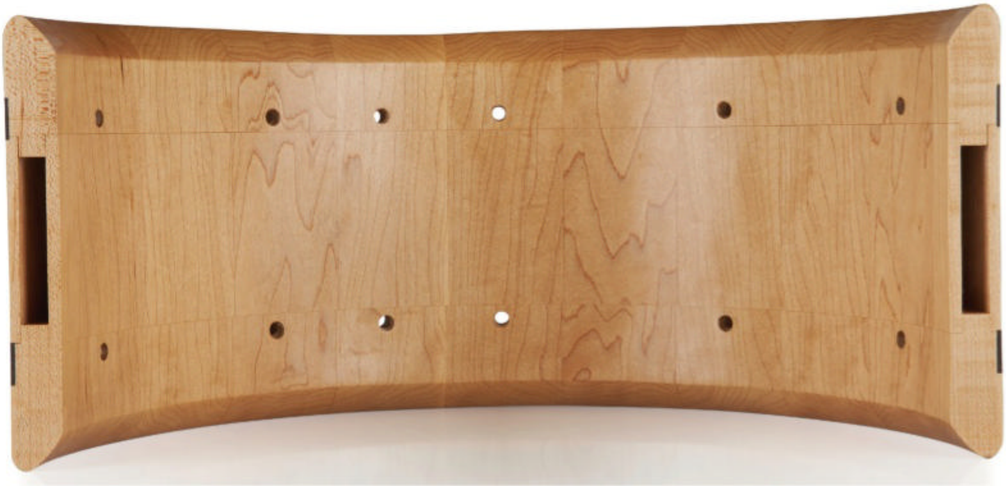
I once read a question on an on-line forum asking if the shell actually mattered to the drum sound. Good question. In my humble opinion: Yes! Everything matters because everything affects the sound of the drum.

It seems Doc Sweeney's main line of thinking stems from looking at how other acoustic instruments produced their signature rich sounds and presence, for example a hollow body guitar. With that principle in mind, the idea for a sound chamber, or acoustic resonance chamber that was built into the shell, was born. Doc Sweeney calls this the HOLLOCORE, simply because the core (or center section) of the shell, is hollow all the way around.

The HOLLOCORE drum shell is principally a stave construction design. However, this stave shell is very different from conventional thinking. The design consists of separate solid batter and resonant bearing edge sections. The hollow core is made of thin internal and exterior walls that slip into joints on the bearing edge sections. The connecting walls are constructed in the stave fashion and are perfectly finished to blend almost seamlessly into the appearance of the drum's shell.

The shell measures in at 6.5 x 14 and it is 0.75" thick. This thickness not only provides the room necessary for the Hollocore but provides for the 30-degree rounded bearing edge. Therefore, no reinforcement rings are required. Inlays are placed at the two connecting points between the bearing edge sections and the Hollocore. After the sanding and drilling process, the entire shell receives a beautiful, hand rubbed oil finish.

Two-point tube lugs provide a traditional look while employing minimal contact with the shell. They also work to strengthen the shell's integrity. While the heavier die cast hoops are provided with this drum, other hoop options are available upon request. This drum was shipped with an Aquarian Super 2 batter head and an Aquarian resonant head sporting the Doc Sweeney logo. A clear



acrylic vent grommet frames the vent hole almost invisibly, while an Inde Snare Strainer and Butt, and 16 strand wire snares, round out the hardware.

With the exception of the vent grommet, the Hollocore resonance chamber remains totally uninterrupted. No hardware comes in contact with the Hollocore. Only the top and bottom solid sections of the shell are used as hardware contact points and fasteners.

The sound of this drum is big! That being said, I find it to be extremely controlled. It is not obnoxiously loud, unless you want it to be. Grace notes are perfect and sensitive. Loud notes really cranked and cut though. The more I dug in, the more the Hollocore's resonant character exposed itself.

The snare's note is wide, without all the uncontrolled ringing that comes with some really resonant drums. There didn't seem to be a lot of unwanted overtones. It's a fat and throaty sound that fits nicely into a wide variety of music. The maple shell gives this drum a nice warm and earthy timbre that works nicely and responds to a variety of tunings with ease.

While playing different styles of music, I found myself going totally "rudimental" on this drum at one point while sitting at the kit. In doing this, I realized that the snare's versatility not only works well as part of the drum set but would also work effectively in a concert band or orchestral setting. While most stave constructed drums generally provide a good "thump," I could actually feel this drum's presence on my legs and in my chest. The resonant projection was there!

The construction of any drum is as an acoustic resonance chamber, a membranophone. The Hollocore extends that characteristic into the shell, amplifying that resonance with exceptional musical results. The internal cavity of the shell (Hollocore) resonates with the rest of the drum, providing more low-end and presence than many other snares, past or present. And it does this while maintaining a seriously controlled sound.

I've seen many "improvements," fads, and gimmicks over the years. Those designs are created and promoted to build a "better mouse trap," but I don't think this is one of them. The Hollocore Snare Drum design is a game changing option in drum design that does make a noticeable and positive difference in sound. I believe it is a contribution in design that is here to stay. I also believe the Hollocore will inspire even more changes in the once humble design of a drum.

The review drum came with a Maple shell and Walnut inlays. However, Doc Sweeney also makes a Walnut version with Maple inlays, as well as a combination shell of Maple and Mahogany with Walnut inlays. With Hollocore, options won't be a problem.

If you, like the folks at Doc Sweeney Drums, have been looking for a drum that screams "FAT – PUNCH – POWER" (as Doc Sweeney likes to put it,) then you owe it to yourself to look into this one. Like all of the products at Doc Sweeney Drums, you'll find extremely well made, one of a kind, hand-crafted instruments that look and sound great. They may come in a box, but Doc Sweeney didn't get there by thinking that way! The Hollocore's retail price is $975.00

Docsweeneydrums.com

Pat Petrillo: Big Rhythm from Jersey

By Mark Griffith

Pat Petrillo is the quintessential hard working professional musician. He is both a "drummer's drummer," and to some, an unsung hero. Pat has earned the respect of his peers and has built a great reputation in the drum industry. He comes from a culturally diverse neighborhood in New Jersey, halfway between Philadelphia and New York City, which has made it convenient for him to work and keep a presence in both cities.

On his new record, *The Power Station Sessions* (Autumn Hill Records,) Pat pays homage to the New York City music scene where he cut his teeth. It's a veritable groove-fest of originals and covers arranged for a great horn band he has assembled called The Big Rhythm Band. They play everything from deep pocket Funk/R&B to Blues shuffles, Jersey Shore Rock to Philly Jazz/Fusion, and there is a dash of New Orleans thrown in just to spice it up. Pat plays it all with the conviction of a drummer on a mission…to serve the music at all costs. He learned by playing along to records from The Beatles to James Brown, Weather Report to The Police, and while honing his rudimental snare chops in drum corps with the famous Bayonne Bridgemen.

His earliest recording experiences were as a high school kid in the New Jersey studio of legendary producer Tony Camillo ("Midnight Train to Georgia,") playing percussion on a variety of disco records, unknown to him who it was or what it was for. But it didn't matter. It was great experience. Pat went off to college to study music and came back home to Jersey to study (and later teach) at the famed Drummers Collective. The rest of us first met Pat when he was featured on a DCI video on the rudiments.

Not only did his career as an in-demand clinician start to take hold, but he hit the Broadway scene as a sub drummer. He played for *A Chorus Line, Grease,* and *Footloose,* did a national tour of *Dreamgirls*, and *Newsies*. He also did a stint as the house drummer for the Comedy Central Show, *Exit 57* and did a bunch of jingles. All the while, Pat was splitting his time in Philly playing and recording with guitarist Ed Hamilton, keyboardist Dave Falciani, bassist Gerald Veasley, and percussionist Jose Rossy (of Weather Report fame.) It was Rossy who

Ludwig
the Pat Petrillo
Big Rhythm Band
EVANS

Lloyd Bishop

recommended Pat for the drum chair with Patti LaBelle, his first major artist gig.

As an educator, Petrillo's books and videos *Hands, Grooves, & Fills* and *Learn to Read Rhythms* (Hudsonmusic.com) are a staple in drum education. His live appearances and online lessons on Drumeo have inspired a new generation of drummers with Pat's serious groove and fluid style. In this interview, we'll learn about his career and where things are headed for this working-class drummer/educator/entrepreneur.

MD: What was auditioning for Patti LaBelle like?

PP: It was one of the weirdest things that I have ever done. There were four different drummers auditioning at the same time, and everybody was told to bring their own drums, which I thought was strange. We all set our drums up on a big stage in Patti's warehouse in South Philly and the musical director had us all sitting at our drums. I thought he was going to have us play one at a time. He calls "Lady Marmalade" with all four of us playing at the same time and in the same room! He pointed to each one of us and said, "YOU play the kick drum part, YOU play the snare part, YOU play the hi hat part, and YOU (the fourth guy) don't do anything until I tell you!" Then he counted off the tune. That was such a strange moment, but he was testing us. He figured that if you really knew the groove that you could play any of the parts. That's why he split the groove between us. He wanted to find out who knew the groove and who didn't, and who could follow directions and who couldn't. I was fresh out of college, and already involved doing Broadway shows, so I could follow directions very well.

MD: That's a really "interesting" way of handling the audition process, I suppose?

PP: Bud Ellison (the musical director) instantly found out who could follow directions and who couldn't. And I'm sure he wanted to see if any of us would start laughing at the absurdity of the process. The audition was instantly cut down to two guys, one of

Lloyd Bishop

which was me, and I ended up getting the gig. I had that gig for about six months, and it was an honor to play with her. Patti was probably the best singer that I have ever played with. I got married while I was in that band, and I couldn't do some gigs and a tour because I was on my honeymoon. That's when they got Dony Wynn to do the gig, then John Blackwell joined the band after that. Patti tended to change drummers like a pair of socks.

MD: Other than Broadway, and Patti LaBelle, what other gigs and artists have you played and recorded with?

PP: I've played and recorded a lot with singer/songwriter Glen Burtnik. We did a few records together including *Palookaville*, which is a great pop record, I'm really proud of that one. Through playing with Glen, I was in the rhythm section playing for various events and festivals backing singers like John Waite, Phoebe Snow, and Patty Smyth. Glen would use his rhythm section as the nucleus of the house band, and I got to really develop relationships with various MD's and musicians that would use me on their projects as well.

I've also backed the great singer Gloria Gaynor for a few years, and toured around the US, as well as Asia, Indonesia, and a trip to Russia. That was really wild, backline drumsets were not really a thing over there, *(if you know what I mean.)* I still occasionally work with her.

MD: That's a hard groovin' gig.

PP: True! It's not just "disco," it's POCKET, and you have to be rock solid and make people dance, that's for sure. I tend to play with a lot of groove artists, whether it's Rock or R&B, but I also dig the Philly jazz fusion stuff that has always been in my wheelhouse.

MD: Where did you go to college?

PP: Morehead State University in Kentucky, with Professor Frank Oddis. I wanted to go to a school that had a great percussion program, and where everyone was better than me. I had never played classical percussion, but I knew it would help me as a musician. I got my Bachelor's degree and my Masters in Music Education. I played in Percussion Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble, and Jazz Vocal Ensemble. I have always enjoyed the education side of things and learning how to be a well-rounded person as well as a musician, and college did that for me. When I got home and started studying at Drummers Collective, that really helped me develop my skills as a working musician in New York. Playing in those various rhythm section classes was awesome. I was really able to fuse the college approach with the Collective's real-world approach. That really helped me when I was backing singers in various contexts or doing any gig or recording session. A lot of people really can't take direction well, and when you are backing an artist, that's what you have to do. You have to listen to what the musical director says and take his (or her) direction. You really learn how to do that in college.

MD: I'm a firm believer in (for better and for worse) we teach how we were taught. What type of teaching methods and experience with different teachers did you have?

PP: Yes, but that can work both ways. You can learn what *to* do and what *not* to do. I learned how to treat education with respect. You also gain that respect for education through learning about the history of the instrument. I started playing very early, around age 5 or 6, but I didn't take lessons. My teachers were Ringo, Clyde, Jabo, Earl Palmer, Bonham, Art Blakey, Gadd, Al Jackson Jr. etc. I didn't take "formal" drumset lessons until college, that's when I started working hard on studying jazz, and different styles.

> I learned how to treat education with respect. You also gain that respect for education through learning about the history of the instrument.

> Frankie (Malabe) would always say, "Don't treat this music as just a beat, because it's so much more than a beat, it's a culture."

MD: What did you study at Drummers Collective?

PP: While I was at The Collective, I took all the 12-week classes they offered. I also studied privately with Hank Jaramillo, Rob Weiner, and took a bunch of lessons with Peter Erskine. He was very helpful in shaping my jazz philosophy and my jazz playing, and just my time keeping overall in every genre. He really helped me develop my communication skills in my teaching as well. He was real direct, concise, and he didn't throw platitudes around lightly. He was great. I also studied Afro Cuban music with Frankie Malabe. Frankie would always say, "Don't treat this music as just a beat, because it's so much more than a beat, it's a culture." So when I teach, I try not to just teach a beat or a fill, I like to put music into context. At the same time, you do need a certain amount of coordination to put beats and fills into the musical context. I like to teach both the technical side and the musical side of things to students. I like to turn students on to the great drummers and grooves of the past as well. We are all paying homage and standing on the shoulders of the drummers that came before us. My overall educational philosophy is to blend the technical and the historical sides together.

I have found that many teachers tend to avoid a student's weak points, and they want to teach students how to improve things that they can already do. But a good teacher will identify a student's weaknesses and try to improve those things that are holding them back. THAT'S the hard part. I always tell intermediate students that at first, they are going to sound *bad* a heck of a lot more than they are going to sound *good*. But you must have really thick skin, fight through that, and embrace it. Thankfully, today with iphones and video you can film yourself and see your improvement in real time. Teaching will always be a big part of who I am as a musician. I love giving back, it's something I've always done, and I will continue to do.

Speaking of teaching, learning, and education, makes me think of something. Steve Gadd was in town with David Sanborn, we talked on the phone, and he was gracious to let me hang for a while at soundcheck. Steve was having trouble with his bass drum sound, so he asked me to help him figure it out and be another set of ears. After we tweaked his bass drum a bit, he asked me to play it while he went out front and listened. I was like "*WHAT*?" This is crazy! Here I am sitting on Steve's kit with Steve listening to ME play HIS kit! It was a trip. We finished tuning it up a bit more, and I just had to throw in Steve's signature ratamacue fill and thanked him for that inspiration. Then I played a few of my little variations of that fill, and Steve actually asked me how I played the variations! Here I was with the drummer who inspired me so much, and he was asking ME about a few of the orchestrations that I had developed off of what he had played! It was amazing! It was a full circle moment. I was so humbled by his graciousness and his inimitable style. I stayed for the rest of soundcheck. Lo and behold, between songs I heard him working on one of my orchestrations (or reconstructions) of one of his classic licks. That was it right there.

cathy Vena

You never stop learning, you never stop evolving, you never stop creating. *THAT’S* what it’s all about. That’s why education is so important, because we are ALL always learning from each other.
MD: If we are *really* paying attention, Steve Gadd is teaching us ALL how to be musicians.
PP: Absolutely. Roy Haynes, Ringo, Charlie Watts, Jim Keltner, James Gadson, they are all the same way. They all inspire us.
MD: So how did the Big Rhythm Band manifest?
PP: I just wanted a steady outlet to play and record the music and arrangements I wanted to play. Putting all my influences together, crafting cool and interesting arrangements, and controlling my own situation. I wanted to play what I want to play, and with whom I want to play. The Big Rhythm Band plays a ton of different groove styles…hence the name. A horn band with a big groove!
MD: And that’s a New Jersey thing too, there is such a history of horn bands in New Jersey.
PP: Absolutely! Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, Kool and the Gang… and don’t forget Count Basie!
MD: You have done two records with your band so far. The first one, *The Abbey Road Sessions* (Palmetto Records), was done at Abbey Road in Studio 2, Let’s talk a bit about that record first, and how it came to be.
PP: Well, my first love was The Beatles and Ringo, although they had basically broken up by the time that I got turned on to them. I learned the lyrics and the song forms before I even had a drum set. It was embedded in my soul. I knew that I wanted to do horn arrangements of certain Beatles songs that lent themselves to reimagining, but I didn’t want to create typical “big band” arrangements. It had to be the Beatles vocals and harmonies orchestrated for a horn section, with spot on arrangements of the songs that fit that approach best.

Next, it HAD to be recorded at Abbey Road Studio 2. So I booked Abbey Road Studio 2 for two days, we rented a 1966 Ludwig Super Classic kit from John Henry’s, and I found two older 5.5” Jazz Festival snares. Paul Francis (formerly of Zildjian) created a set of Avedis cymbals similar to what Ringo used, a 20” with rivets, and an 18”. We actually tracked the horn parts here in New Jersey with a click, and then I tracked the drums and part of the rhythm section at Abbey Road. I hired a great musician named Duncan Maitland to play the actual Abbey Road keyboards that were used on the original recordings on “Lady Madonna,” “Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da,” and “Martha, My Dear.” When you hear my record you are hearing the actual keyboards that were played on the Beatle records. We used a lot of the same compressors and a few of the old D20 mic’s too. That was a seminal moment in my musical life to be sitting in the same place, using some of the same gear, playing some of the same songs, in the same studio as the Beatles. My record is more of an homage to Ringo and the Beatles, not a tribute or an imitation. I give a nod to Ringo’s original parts, but I also added a bit of my own take, but I always kept the music at the forefront.

We are all paying homage and standing on the shoulders of the drummers that came before us. My overall educational philosophy is to blend the technical and the historical sides together.

MD: It’s a perfect concept because The Beatles brought horns to many of their tunes. It all started with “Got To Get You Into My Life.”
PP: Yes, and we did a cool version of that on the record as well, mashing it up with the Earth, Wind, & Fire version. Producer George Martin used horns a lot more than people realize.
MD: What are some of the other musical influences that shaped your style of playing?
PP: New York had lots of great AM and FM radio stations playing a variety of music in the mid 70s early 80s. As a kid I got turned on to them all. Amazingly, I can remember the day I was listening to Ringo on my 8-track, then I heard James Brown come on the radio. I went right out and bought a James Brown 8-track called *Hot Pants.* By that time, I had my first drumset, and I went from playing along to Ringo to playing along with Clyde and Jabo in one afternoon. I was also listening to early Steve Gadd with Al Jarreau and Chick Corea, but later I found out he played on a lot disco records too (“The Hustle,” “Stuff,”) I was listening to Al Jackson Jr on Stax records, Earth, Wind, & Fire, Weather Report…you name it!
MD: Let’s talk about the new record, *The Power Station Sessions.* You applied the same concept to music recorded at that iconic studio in New York City. You recorded some of the classic music that was recorded there, plus some original tunes.
PP: You can think of many artists when you think of the Power Station, but when I think of the Power Station I think of the great groove records by Chic, David Bowie, Paul Simon, Bruce Springsteen, and Billy Joel. I wanted to make this a New York-New Jersey centric record.
MD: You have lots of guests on the record, including one of THE greatest rhythm guitarists ever in Nile Rodgers. Can you talk about the relationship between the drums and the rhythm guitar?
PP: That’s a great question. Most people connect drums and bass, but rhythm guitar is crucial. I wrote the opening tune “48th Street” with Nile Rodgers in mind specifically. I wanted his pocket, his sound, his feel, and the way that he plays rhythm guitar. Nile Rogers is such an icon in the New York music scene. He grew up playing jazz, but like so many musicians he took that sensibility to groove music. Lenny Pickett played a solo on that tune as well. Capturing that New York vibe was really important to me, and I think we did that. The grooves that the late great Tony Thompson and Bernard Edwards played with Chic are so inspiring and so classic,

they did so much for popular music at that time, and most of it was cut at The Power Station.

MD: The harmonic information, the rhythmic information, the groove, and even some of the melodic information is ALL in the rhythm guitar part.

PP: And Nile is GREAT at that. When he heard the changes to my tune "48th Street" his voicings were spot on. He knew where to voice everything on the guitar, he heard the changes like a jazz guitarist would, but instead of playing lines, he was playing rhythms around the changes. At that point, all I had to do was hold on!

Unfortunately, the rhythm guitar has taken a back seat in popular music recently. To me the rhythm guitar player is THE TIME in a funk or groove tune. When a rhythm guitar player starts a tune by himself, *that's* the time, *that's* the song. It's not what the drummer or the bassist wants, it's what the rhythm guitarist is playing. Take Prince for example, he had impeccable time. The feel for the whole song is coming through the rhythm guitar. Having great time is not always playing 100% to a metronome. It's like a rubber band, it flexes and moves, and you have to listen and lock in.

On that same *Hot Pants* record I mentioned earlier is the track "Doing it to Death." That 12/8 feel that the rhythm guitar plays in that tune embeds the time into your DNA. When I'm playing those types of tunes, whether you're playing with a rhythm guitar player or not, you have to hear and feel the subdivisions that the rhythm guitarist would be (or is) playing, inside your head. Look at a tune like "Smells Like Teen Spirit." If you can't get with the groove that Kurt Cobain is playing on the rhythm guitar from the beginning, then that music is NOT for you. The rhythm guitar part is the soul and the thread of a lot of musical styles.

MD: There are some other great guitar players on this record, can you talk more about playing with Oz Noy and Felicia Collins?

PP: Oz Noy has a very unique sound and has great time and rhythmic sensibility. He's on our version of "Black Cow," an original of mine called "Global Warming," and an arrangement we did of Billy Joel's "Big Man on Mulberry Street," where he blazes a solo.

Speaking of that tune, I loved the shuffle that Liberty DeVitto played on that tune, so I had to play that for sure. Then I crafted some other grooves inside the tune. While we were recording, I called Lib and asked him where they cut it, and it was indeed at Power Station in Studio C! Later I found out that my engineer, Roy Hendrickson, was actually an assistant on that session. So, it's come full circle. Felicia Collins was in the Late Night with David Letterman Band and plays on a song of mine called "Asbury Days" that harkens back to Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes. She's a great Rock/Blues/Funk player who also has great time and feel.

MD: Liberty created great drum parts for all those Billy Joel songs. He's like Ringo in a way, his parts become synonymous with, and inseparable from those classic songs.

PP: He's absolutely an icon. I respect his playing so much, and he's such a great dude.

MD: The vibe of this record is so varied, but it all works together. There are so many groove styles. Let's get into some of the other tracks.

PP: You know, I see this record as almost an "Americana" record of sorts, but not in the sense of Americana music that is coming out of country and singer songwriters. In my eyes, Americana isn't a slice of American music, it's ALL of American music. I'm playing Americana music in the sense that we are playing American grooves from funk to soul to blues to rock. I call all of that music "Americana" instrumental music. New Orleans music evolved into rhythm and blues, and that evolved into rock and roll and funk, all of that evolved into fusion, which contains jazz, which (of course) goes back to New Orleans. It's a big circle, and it's all based on the blues. All of that music is my inspiration, it's all in my DNA. If you call yourself The Big Rhythm Band, you better bring some BIG rhythms and cover as many groove genres as you can.

Of course, I had to do a Beatles cover on this record too, and I had to include my old friend Glen Burtnik. I went with "It Won't Be Long" because I always thought that would lend itself well to horns because of the call and response. I reworked an original called "Global Warming." That was actually two different tunes that I played and recorded with our mutual old friend from Philly, the late great Dave Falciani. That tune has a real Weather Report vibe.

MD: Then you have a really cool arrangement of "Hey, Pocky Way."

PP: I studied a lot of New Orleans based music in depth with Ricky Sebastian at the Collective. I went on a deep dive into researching the history of New Orleans music for years. I went from traditional second line to the Mardi Gras Indians. I heard how Earl Palmer connected that to Little Richard, Fats Domino, and Professor Longhair. Eventually I got to The Meters. I often tell my students, you need to BE from that region of the country to play in that spirit. But you can "*come from there*" by visiting it musically and listening to the roots of the music of that region. It's so important as a drummer to convey the essence of the feel. You can't hide it…People can hear it. It doesn't get much better than "Hey

> **You never stop learning, you never stop evolving, you never stop creating. THAT'S what it's all about. That's why education is so important, because we are ALL always learning from each other.**

Pocky Way," so we went there and did a version of that classic tune.

MD: You have some cool arrangements of a couple of R&B classics on this record as well.

PP: Yes, a track that's received lots of airplay on smooth jazz radio is our cover of "It Knocks Me Off My Feet," which is one of my favorite Stevie Wonder ballads. We also do a cool version of Earth Wind and Fire's "Runnin'." That band was in heavy rotation on my record player at an early age. That is a track that I always loved, it was one of the first times that I ever heard a samba, and it happened to be on an R&B record. Towards the end of the tune, I took a solo, and it was "first take, only take!" I had intended to do a couple then "pick and slice" as many do, but this just flowed naturally in context, so what you hear is what went down, with no edits. When you start thinking about things you play a little bit more mechanically, you aren't in the moment, and you can get in your own way. I'm really happy with that solo because what came out, came out.

MD: We have included a transcription of the solo, as well as the actual video clip from the Power Station, with the audio from the record dubbed in. **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiQjBJF9Jn0.** Everyone will see, no punches. Being in the moment and letting the emotion take you is what it's all about.

PP: So many of the great studio drummers back in the 70's like Bernard Purdie, Chris Parker, and Gadd were totally in the moment when they recorded. Sure, they punched in one or two things, but the initial tracking sessions had all of that guttural emotion and feeling because they were carving out great parts for the song from a

Ludwig
the Pat Petrillo
Big Rhythm Band
EVANS

Lloyd Bishop

musical, emotional place.
MD: No one ever really talks about Earth, Wind, and Fire as much as they should. The stuff with two drummers was amazing, Fred White had a such a nice pocket, and their early records are pretty experimental, and actually sound like Weather Report at times. What was it about them that attracted you?
PP: Like you said, Earth Wind & Fire *Faces* is like a fusion record. For songwriting, lyrical content, and the emotion on that record, it's one of my favorites. That thick, "thuddy" drum sound was quintessential 70's to me. Growing up listening to the Beatles; lyrics and lyrical content was always really important to me. The spiritual and emotional lyrics combined with the deep pocket makes listening to EW&F a musically uplifting experience.
MD: You have mentioned New Jersey a few times, and the New Jersey musical tradition never gets talked about. What have you learned from being a New Jersey musician?
PP: Where do I start? Talk about versatility, New Jersey has it all in our musical tradition: Sinatra to Frankie Valli, George Clinton, Bon Jovi, Queen Latifah, Naughty By Nature, Whitney, Kool and the Gang, Count Basie, Sarah Vaughn, Celia Cruz, all the jazz and big band musicians, Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes, and of course Bruce Springsteen. There really isn't one "Jersey Sound," it's just too diverse. New Jersey is a real melting pot of culture and music. It's an attitude for sure. But I was exposed to so much great music through living here in Jersey, and I really didn't have to seek it out, it was all right here. I just opened my ears and let it all in.
MD: Putting Steely Dan's "Black Cow" on your record included another New Jersey musician in Donald Fagen.
PP: Oh yeah, people forget he's from New Jersey. I've always dug "Black Cow" because of the drumming of Paul Humphrey, it was very understated. I decided to put a little more of a swing to it. Those backing vocals from the original lent themselves perfectly to horn arrangements. We had to make some choices because there are horns on the original, so we had to decide (in the arrangement) who was going to play what. But then I decided to have (guitarist) Oz Noy play the melody and he just sings on the track. He really took the melody and made it his own.
MD: You mentioned the track, "Asbury Daze", and it can't get more Jersey than that, featuring yet another Jersey-ite, John Popper.
PP: Absolutely! I wanted to write my own homage to that great town, having played many shows at The Stone Pony. It's my summer beach hang too! John played a killin' solo. I wanted this tune to bring you "down the shore" with me. Smell the sausage and peppers and hear the people on the boardwalk. It's a feel-good jam. It's got a bit of "lilt" (half swing/half straight) feel to it. It puts you in that "Jersey shore" vibe…. *(but without Snooki!)* Felicia Collins took the lead guitar spot on this one, and she brings so much flavor, groove, and power when she plays.
MD: Who are some of the core members of the band on the record other than the guests?
PP: Some of the other musicians on the record include bassist Scott Ambush (Spyro Gyra,) on a bunch of tracks, David Cook played keyboards. He is Taylor Swift's musical director and is a very versatile musician. Guitarist B.D. Lenz is also on it, as well as Steve Jankowski, who played trumpet and did some arrangements, and Tom Timko played tenor and soprano sax. Plinky Giglio and I mixed the record here in Jersey. I think, overall, the drumming on the record is a real good snapshot of what I do musically.
MD: What gear did you use on the record, and how did you select what kit and snare would go with each track?
PP: I've been a Ludwig artist for many years and love the variety of woods I can choose from. And Ludwig snares are THE snares! I used two different Ludwig kits set up across from each other. They were a Legacy Mahogany kit with 10", 12" toms, 14" floor, with a 14x22 kick for a more "contemporary" sound. I used Evans Clear EC2 heads on those drums. Then I had a Club Date Downbeat series kit with 12" tom, 14" floor, 14x20 kick for a thicker, vintage sound. Those had Evans Coated UV2 heads. I had a coated Emad on both kits. I used a variety of Ludwig snares from a Black Beauty, Copperphonic, Acrolite, to a 60s Supraphonic, a Legacy Mahogany snare, and a re-issue Jazzfest. I also used a 6x13" side snare for a little "pop."

I'm also a Zildjian artist and used a variety of timbres and sounds. As you may know, I designed the 21" Zildjian K Custom Organic Ride, which I think it's one of Zildjian's most versatile ride cymbals. That's on half of this record, I also used the 20" and 18" Avedis cymbals that I had used on the Abbey Road record, because they have a little bit more wash. I also used a 16" K Dark Crash and an 18" Special Dry Crash. My hi hats are a mashup of a 14" Mastersound bottom with a thin Kerope top. Right now, I am working with Zildjian on a 19" Organic Crash Ride. That would be a follow up to the 21" K Custom Organic Ride. In terms of sticks, I've recently switched over to endorsing Vic Firth and I'm using the X55A.
MD: Now that you have done *Abbey Road Sessions* and *The Power Station Sessions* and the music that is associated with each, what's next?
PP: Probably a full-on original record

The grooves that the late great Tony Thompson and Bernard Edwards played with Chic are so inspiring and so classic, they did so much for popular music at that time, and most of it was cut at The Power Station.

with the same band, no covers at all, but expanding and doing original tunes. Perhaps do an "LA" record at Sunset Sound, or maybe a record at Muscle Shoals?

MD: Changing gears a bit, what advice would you give to younger drummers coming up in the industry today? As a performer/educator who are some drummers that you think are moving the art-form forward?

Lloyd Bishop

PP: Without trying to overstate what would seem to be obvious, playing the drums is so much more than technique. You can hear a lot of excellent young drummers on Instagram with blazing chops and technique, but I also hear many drummers without musicality, with a lot of bashing and not a lot of space in their playing AT ALL. I would love to see more MUSIC happening, less "dig me" stuff. I hear lots of overplaying and just using the instrument just to get "likes."

I feel that you have to take the time to go back and listen to the music of the past for perspective. If you have never listened to many styles of music, be it shuffles, blues, swing, jazz, country, rock, or be-bop, then you can't really authentically play that music and "come from that (musical) place." No book is going to teach you how to play any music authentically. You must put the time in and listen to the music first. That's where I started…and still do.

That's a real shortcoming in today's musical and drumming education, in my opinion. There are a lot of people showing you *what* to play, but there is not a whole lot of explanation of *why* we play something a certain way, what you should be listening to, and providing you feedback on the tools you need to perform that music authentically. For any style of music, you must have a musical point of reference. As a drummer today, we are more aware than ever of the different styles of music. We have more drummers today that are more respectful to those styles than we ever have, and that's good. Lots of drummers are trying to play other genres, which is wonderful. However, as a drummer the only way to really play any genre authentically is visit the music first. That is the meaning of the Big Rhythm Band, perform various genres with perspective and authenticity.

I am always inspired by other drummers, watching what they are doing, and hearing the music they are playing. Guys like Calvin Rodgers, Nate Smith, J-Rod Sullivan, Mark Giuliana, Raghav Mehrotra. Then there are legends like Peter Erskine, Ringo, Steve Smith, Gadd, Garibaldi, Brian Blade, Gavin Harrison… There are just so many great, inspiring drummers.

MD: You've designed a few products that are also popular in the drum community.

PP: I designed the P4 Practice Pad that's exclusively distributed by Drumeo and available on their website or on Amazon. It's the most unique practice pad on the market with three different levels and four different playing surfaces. Then there's also a product available on my website **patpdrummer.com** called the Practice Station, which is a "practice organizer" that holds a practice pad, a metronome, sticks, there's a cupholder as well as a music stand. It sits in a snare basket. Of course, there's the K Custom Organic Ride.

MD: Having been in the industry for a while now, can you talk about achieving longevity in a music and drumming career?

PP: You have to continually play, work, teach (if you are into it,) practice, meet people, develop relationships, and keep repeating that process. Truthfully, I don't even know if people are really thinking of drumming as a career much anymore, it seems like a lot of people are just into making videos, which is fine.

My question is, how many people are

actually monetizing to the point where they are actually "making a living?"

The good thing about social media is you get to see and hear drummers play on videos, and the bad thing about social media is that you get to see and hear drummers JUST playing VIDEO SOLOS! I would like to see more drummers making and creating music and interacting with others more in a live setting. Young musicians have to create an environment for themselves to meet other musicians and create music, that's where the rubber meets the road. The controlled environment of playing to a track or soloing on Instagram or YouTube is not the same as playing with other musicians. That's where YOU have to drive the bus, no pre-recorded tracks. That's where the opportunities for growth and career expansion take place, live and in person.

I have always tried to be a student of my craft. That's different than making a couple of videos and throwing them out there. There is a lot of instant gratification going on today, and that doesn't last. To me, that fleeting popularity isn't what a career is about. A career is about developing and nurturing relationships. In anything that you choose to do, not just music, opportunities are earned not only through how well you do your job, and in this case, that means your playing, but by how you treat people and your "workability" as a person. If people like what you do, and want to hire you to do that, they will.

In this industry persistence and consistency are really important. I have always tried to be a positive influence in the industry, creating educational material, doing clinics (although that's not as popular anymore,) doing various sessions, playing Broadway, and just being ready for any and all opportunities. I think most drummers carve a career out of playing/touring with an artist or being lucky enough to be in a band that can tour and have a great following, and then teaching at some level. I think you should be a good person to hang with, always hone your craft, keep changing lanes, and always keep creating. Keep up on technology and your gear. Always remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression, so be ready to shoot your shot, play for the music, and let the chips fall.

MD: We look forward to seeing what's next on the horizon.

PP: Thanks, Mark, I'm honored to be featured in MD after reading about all my heroes over the years.

Pat Petrillo endorses: Ludwig Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Evans Drumheads, Vic Firth Drumsticks, Earthworks Microphones.

Follow Pat:
INSTAGRAM **@patpdrummer**
Web: **www.patpdrummer.com**
Ludwig: **https://artists.ludwig-musser.com/pat-petrillo**
Zildjian: **https://zildjian.com/pat-petrillo.html**
Vic Firth: **https://vicfirth.zildjian.com/pat-petrillo-vf.html**

Check out Pat's drummer profile page, at moderndrummer.com

The NEW album from
Pat Petrillo
NOW AVAILABLE ON ALL STREAMING PLATFORMS
Vinyl & CD at patpdrummer.com
Ludwig
The Pat Petrillo Big Rhythm Band
THE POWER STATION SESSIONS
featuring
Nile Rodgers • John Popper • Oz Noy
Lenny Pickett • Felicia Collins • Glen Burtnik
Insta: @patpdrummer

MODERN DRUMMER CLUB

META PASS NFT

These NFTs will be your key to Modern Drummer's Music, Media & Entertainment ecosystem in Web 3. Our community is growing fast & will reap rewards for all META PASS holders.

MODERNDRUMMERCLUB.COM

HTTPS://DISCORD.GG/MODERNDRUMMERCLUB

HTTPS://TWITTER.COM/DRUMSNFT

PARAMORE'S
ZAC FARRO
Always Evolving

Story by Danny Laverde   Photos by Alex Kluft

Drummer Zac Farro was 16 years old when Paramore's second album *Riot!* was released. Shortly after the release of their next record, *Brand New Eyes*, Zac went out on his own. He left the band in 2010, marking the end of a certain era for Paramore. In 2016, Zac rejoined the band with a revamped sound to record the album *After Laughter*. Paramore (with Zac Farro back behind the kit) was reclaiming their musical presence, and introducing a refreshingly familiar, but completely new, sound to the music world.

Today, *This Is Why* is Paramore's brand-new album, it is reminiscent of *After Laughter* and echoes the band's earlier sound. Zac Farro is once again paving the way for Paramore's authentic new musical style, and he is cementing his place as one of the best modern-day drummers in alternative rock.

Istanbul

MD: You have a very distinctive drumming style, and it's evident in all of your work. What influences have inspired the way you approach drumming?

ZF: Early on, I was really inspired by friends around town that were in local rock bands. I went to a small private school with a lot of other musicians. I think that was the reason we all got into the same sort of music. Kellii Scott from Failure, Zach Lind from Jimmy Eat World, and Dave Grohl, those guys were all a huge influence. For me, it was always about the drummers that played "songs." It wasn't until later that I realized how amazing it is when somebody has insane chops or is technically really good. I was never really drawn to that as a kid. I have always been more of a melodic drummer, somebody that played the song. In my twenties I started delving into the Beatles, that is when I realized that Ringo is the ultimate version of that kind of drummer. At that time, we were all into heavier music like hardcore and metal. It was funny because our band was not hardcore or metal, we were playing Emo rock, but we were still pulling from those heavier influences. On the Warped Tour, we just loved to go see the hardcore and metal bands because we related to that energy. Most people just wanna go smash their drums and go nuts. But I will always gravitate towards someone who is serving the song and playing melodically and musically. Today you see drummers like JD Beck who is more impressive than just playing to the song. But I think the melodic sensibility of the kind of records we all gravitated towards when we grew up, was a huge musical steppingstone for me.

> It wasn't until later that I realized how amazing it is when somebody has insane chops or is technically really good. I was never really drawn to that as a kid.

MD: You mentioned JD Beck and how impressive his skills are. Have you tried to improve on your drumming abilities in recent years?

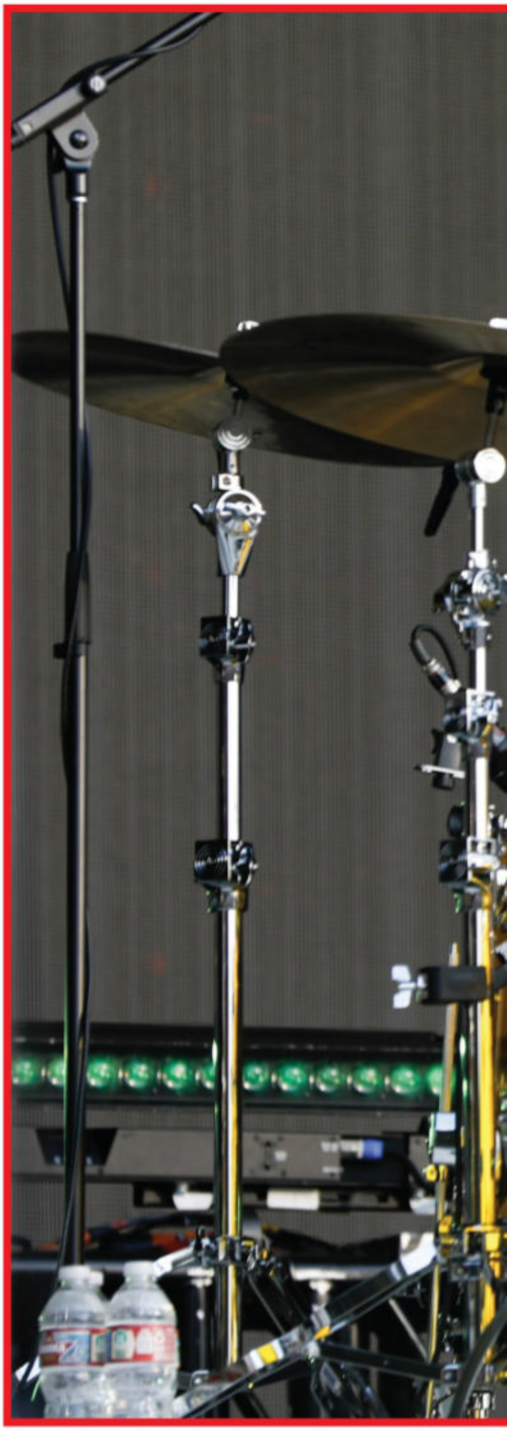
ZF: We spent the whole year of 2022 in LA making the new record. I got bored trying to find something on Spotify to listen to on the way to the studio every day. So I would tune into the radio station KJAZZ 88.1 in LA, I just started delving really deep into jazz. That's why I love JD Beck's drumming. I even started toying with the idea of taking some jazz drum lessons. However, I thought that I couldn't do that at that moment because I'm so full-on in the rock world. However, after this record cycle, I'll probably try to get some lessons in a certain musical genre or territory that I'm not super familiar with, because I always love learning.

When we did the second Paramore record *Riot!* the producer encouraged me to go take lessons again. I thought, "Am I not good enough?" I was sort of offended. But then I did it, and I realized, there's still so much to learn. There were things that I hadn't brushed up on in a while. Whether it's playing rudiments or just learning time signatures, I don't think it should be a blow to anybody's ego to take lessons. At first, I felt sort of bummed about it, but now I look back and think it was super helpful. Today, I'm doing the Purdie shuffle in sound check. I really like practicing that beat. My goal is to play it as fast as I can. That's probably the extent of broadening my drum sphere at this point. I am just sticking to classic rock drumming and playing our music, which is not strictly rock.

MD: What aspects of your drumming have you seen improvements in since taking those lessons?

ZF: My four on the floor bass drum notes were "flamming" on every single hit, and my velocity was off. The other thing was that my right hand was overpowering my left. When I'd go around the kit for a fill, by the end of the fill my left hand would fall off substantially. To this day, flamming a kick and snare is the bane of my existence. Those are two things I am still very conscious of in my playing.

When you're between the ages of 13



and 16, those are three pivotal years when you're playing a bunch. You're so impressionable. Paramore had sold out our first headlining tour before we did *Riot!* There was a bunch of stuff that I thought I had under my belt, but when the rubber hit the road, I had some stuff to learn. I feel like you never stop learning. Even Tony Williams was learning stuff up until the point he was no longer with us. I'm 32 now, I know there's always room to grow. There's always a musical genre that you can tap into if you're not familiar with it.

MD: How did you approach the drumming for the new album *This Is Why*? It's incredibly interesting because you're bringing a lot of *After Laughter* vibes to it. However, you're also returning to your roots and rocking that strong alternative sound.

ZF: With every album, we just go in and see what comes out. It's not like we go in and say let's make a *hair metal* record. There's a Paramore sound that we stick to and kind of orbit around. *After Laughter* didn't really touch on any aggression. It was more of a funky Afrobeat-influenced sound. After we did *After Laughter*, I remember thinking, "Wow, that was a lot of 16th notes on the hi hat." But I wasn't dripping with sweat whenever we were finished with takes.

Ludwig
Ludwig

When I was a kid, that would have been a full workout.

When we recorded the new single called "The News," I felt a feeling that I hadn't had in a long time, especially on a recording. "The News" was a whole take. It had very minimal editing because I wanted it to have the energy and the push and pull of actually playing it live. That's one thing I think people lose in recordings these days, that energy of just playing the whole time and the push and pull of a person playing something that's not computerized. I really like to play a full take all the way down. If I screw up on the bridge or something, I start it over. We did "The News" and "This Is Why" later in the recording process. I felt "This Is Why" was very in my wheelhouse. Over the last five years I have been super influenced by the band CAN. I was listening to them when we were making that song, and that's why I put a piccolo on the side. Then, I went from the piccolo to the main snare, which was a Black Beauty.

> It was so surprising how responsive and diverse the Vistalites were, especially when we put the coated heads on them.

MD: I particularly liked the pre-chorus breakdown before the second chorus on "This Is Why." How did you come up with that beat?

ZF: I don't know how I came with that. I think it came from doing some production on some other projects. I produced my own record called *Natural Disguise*, for my HalfNoise project. Right after that, my friend Becca Mancari from Nashville asked me to produce her record. I learned a lot about listening from the standpoint of a song from the production of those records.

The drumming on *This Is Why* is fusing the worlds of "young me" and "old me." There's something that happens when you're playing 16th notes and you're trying to keep the velocity and the intensity up. It's amazing how small the window can be when the tempo is a bit faster. It's like driving fast and you can only make a few lane changes.

MD: What drums and cymbals are you endorsing now?

ZF: I had been with both Gretsch and Zildjian for a while, but I made a change to Ludwig and Istanbul Agop. We started using a lot of Istanbul Agop cymbals on *This Is Why*, and I just fell in love with their cymbals. Scott Liken from Istanbul Agop is a friend of ours and our producer, Carlos de La Garza. Every once in a while, Scott would pop into the studio because he only lived about 15 minutes away. Scott just showed up and said, "I think you'd really dig the Agop Xist and Traditional." He brought them by, and I just started trying new cymbals. I'd never really tried stuff out that way. In the past I just went with one thing. I started using some dryer, more vintage-sounding cymbals on the record. Then live, I went with more traditional sounding cymbals. It's really cool to be able to play a cymbal instead of just going to soundcheck and seeing if it works. That feels a little backwards. It's been super fun finding new sounds. The guys at Istanbul Agop are great, and Ludwig has also been super friendly, super helpful, and just super cool.

MD: You're using Ludwig Vistalites now, can you explain how that happened?

ZF: Yes, in the past I always played a Gretsch Broadcaster kit. They are great drums, but I haven't ever played a kit live that I'd liked more than the Vistalites. Every night I'm just excited to sit down and play. I didn't want to go with the orange color because that's Mr. Bonham's trademark. I love yellow so I went with yellow.

For the recording, I was a little hesitant to use them. "The News" was the first song on the record that we used the Vistalites. I'd never really recorded or even played Vistalites before, but Carlos (our producer) had a seventies orange Bonham Vistalite kit with the same sizes and everything. Like I said, I was a little apprehensive, but Joe Mullen our percussionist is also my tech. He teched on the record, he can make anything sound good. I'd be super lost without him. It was so surprising how responsive and diverse the Vistalites were, especially when we put the coated

heads on them. Joe even told me he was surprised by how responsive the kit was. That's what kind of changed my mind. Vistalites are a lot more versatile than I thought.

Then, we got the C&C custom percussion setup made to match my kit. Joe got that made from C&C because Ludwig doesn't do anything like that. When we first walked out to soundcheck and saw that everything was matching we thought it looked cool. It looked great because we use a lot of projections on stage. The drums would almost change colors under the lights. It just looked really rad live.

Sometimes endorsements feel like transactions at Guitar Center. It's like, "What do you need? Give me the order." And you're kind of like, "All right, thanks, see ya!" But everybody I've ever worked with at Istanbul Agop and Ludwig have been super nice, and it's been cool to refresh the team and make some new relationships going forward. Especially because there's a lot of touring in 2023.

MD: You're even directing some of Paramore's videos now. For the single "This Is Why" you got the chance to work with Brendan Yates who is the singer of

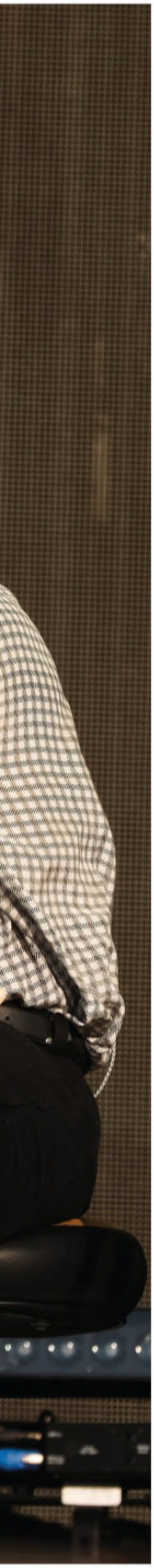
Turnstile. How did you approach the creative process involving the video, since both of you come from a directing background?

ZF: I probably could have had a little bit more say, but I wanted to see what he could do. He's super talented and we really let him take the reins. He did such a great job. During the making of our new record Hayley said, "Zac, check out these Turnstile videos, I know you produce and direct and so does Brendan. You're gonna love them, they're super rad." We checked them out and I thought they were super cool. They really caught the vibe of the band, but they were elevated, and the cinematography was amazing.

I think the coolest thing was, we all went and saw Turnstile do a show, and then two days later we did the video with Brendan. It's different when you catch someone's vibe, and you connect to their vision, their crowd interaction, and their performance. I'd recommend that to anybody. If you're going to work with somebody, go see their show. See what they do, don't just interview them, get to know them. It brings out the best in everybody and you end up rooting for each other.

MD: How does the writing process work with Paramore? Is it split up or does one person do most of the composing?

ZF: The process kind of changes on every record. This record is unique because the band wrote (pretty much) everything together. Hayley always writes the lyrics and the melodies. Because Taylor, Hayley, and I are the main members in the band now, we're kind of constructing everything together, everybody is in the same room. Back in the day when my brother was in the band, he would primarily write all the stuff with Hayley and Taylor. The other guitar player, (who is now our main guitar player,) would help every once in a while. Now, we all have a hand in the production because we've all done our own projects and our ideas are more welcomed. That was the vibe for this record, and that was really cool. Sometimes those situations don't really work out because there are too many cooks in the kitchen. Or sometimes people just don't have the same kind of ideas. If I want something to rock harder and you don't, what are we supposed to



> **“Where would Zeppelin be without Bonham? Where would the Beatles be without Ringo? Where would Nirvana be without Grohl? There are all these pivotal characters, that’s really what I want to bring to this band.**

do? This time around it was pretty damn effortless. We’re all pretty much on the same page, which is kind of rare. It was a super great team because whenever somebody would run out of ideas, the other two people would step in, and that kept the train moving. I had never really been a part of the writing process from start to finish. I was always “only” doing the drum parts. It’s cool to view things through a different lens. I even saw drumming differently. Because I was there from the origin of the song, I wanted the song to be the most important thing. I didn’t want to get in the way of this keyboard part or an important guitar line. It was a really cool experience and I hope we follow that every time we write from now on.

MD: It sounds like a certain magic happens when you are all working together.

ZF: Yes, it’s because you feel connected. There are a lot of bands where the singer will come in and just sing, or the guitar player comes in and just adds a couple of riffs or whatever. We’ve just never been a band like that. We’ve always been hands on, and we really care about everything. We want everybody to be stoked and love what they’re playing and feel super proud of what they added.

MD: When you left the group back in 2010, the band continued without you and released a self-titled album. What did you think about the parts when hearing them and how do you feel about playing those parts since you have come back?

ZF: Ilan Rubin did such a great job on that record. We’re similar in some ways, but we are very different drummers. When I hear that record, everything’s very diligent and precise. Ilan has reached a certain status through playing with Nine Inch Nails (and everybody else he plays with) for a reason, because he’s an unbelievable drummer. When I was out of the band, it was because I chose to leave. It was cool to see who they wanted to work with after we built this thing together. I definitely feel like Ilan knocked it out of the park on that record. I think he did a tremendous job.

But it’s cool to jump back in and have the chance to keep growing with the band. I always think of how I can evolve with the band. How do I change, how do I get better? I have done that since I was a kid. I always wanted to sound different on every album, even though it probably didn’t sound all that different.

MD: Alternative Rock music seems to be making a huge comeback. Have you guys felt that you’ve gotten a wave of new fans alongside the old ones?

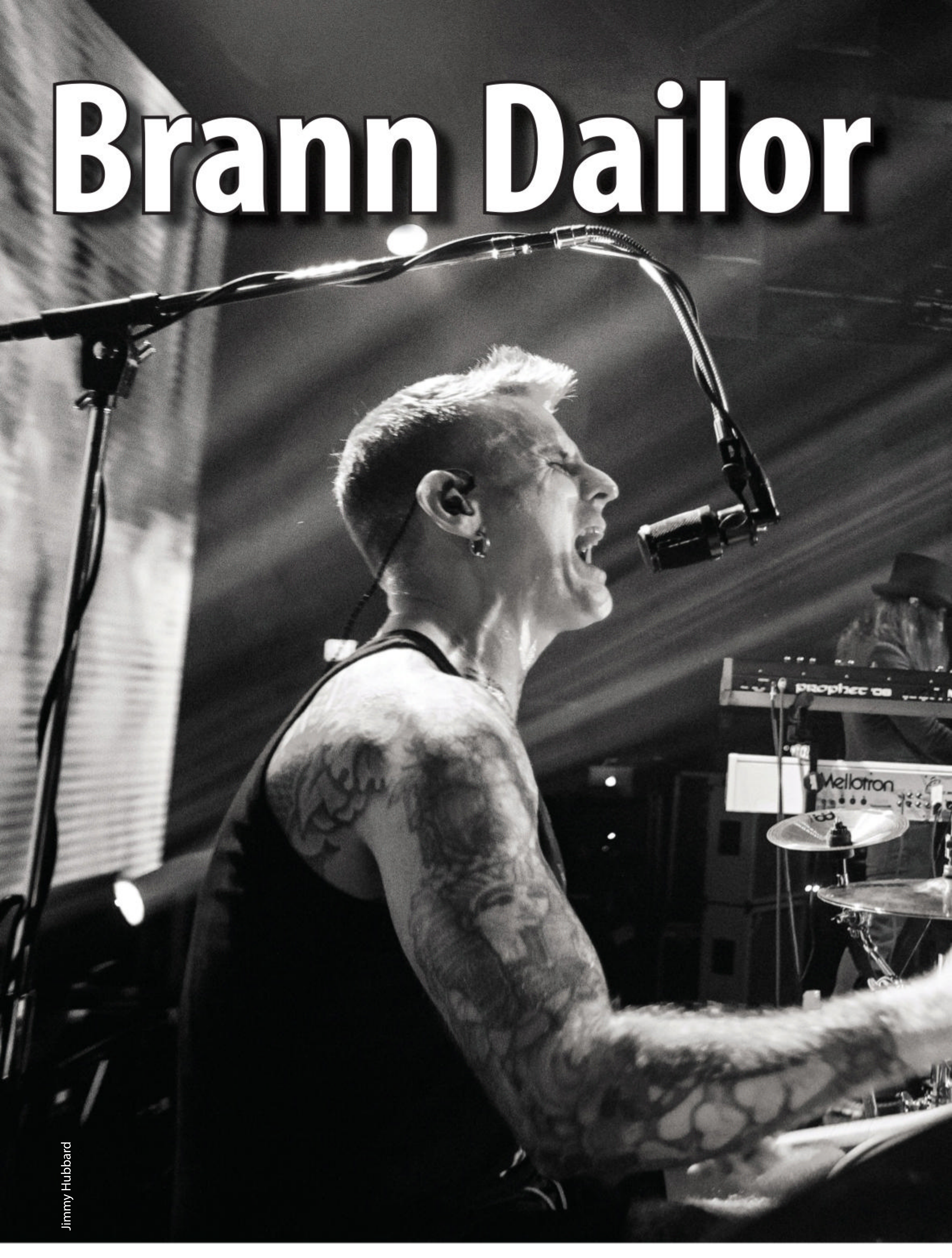
ZF: When we played the When We Were Young Fest the reaction to our new single “This Is Why” was almost as big as when we played “Misery Business,” which is one of our older classic songs. I thought people were going to just storm the stage during “Misery Business.” The Paramore fans have been there for all of it and that’s a really cool feeling. But we’re not just playing our hits now, we still want to grow. We still want to morph, evolve, change, and be inspired.

MD: The journey doesn’t look like it’s going to stop anytime soon. 2023 is looking like it will be a huge year for Paramore. You guys are headlining an arena tour this year.

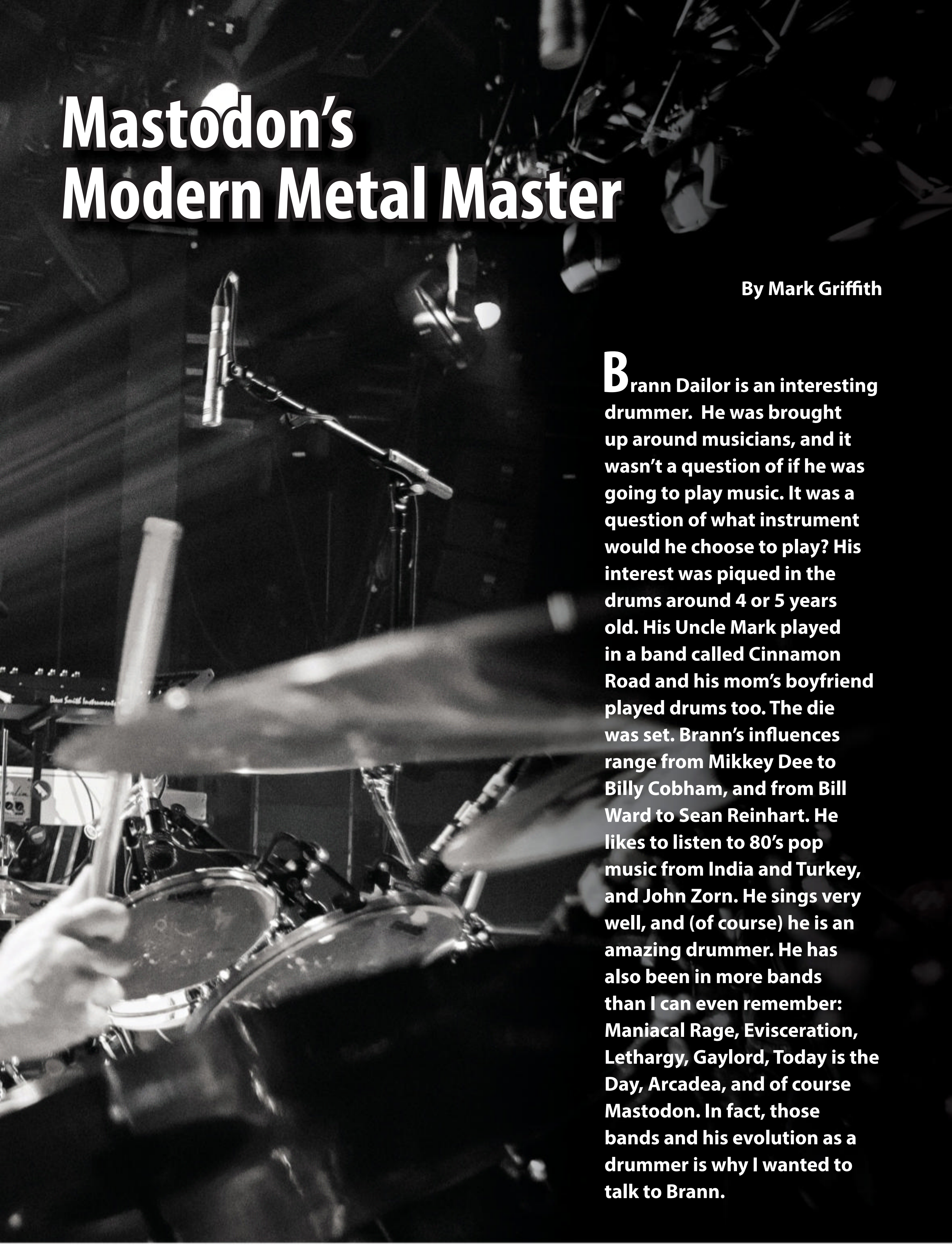
ZF: I am so thankful. It’s kind of hard to believe. Two nights at Madison Square Garden, and two nights at the LA Forum that are already sold out. It doesn’t feel “real,” but in a good way. I think my playing is evolving. I’m really putting the effort in. When I was a kid, I didn’t really care about a band’s drummer. But as I got older, I thought, “Where would Zeppelin be without Bonham? Where would the Beatles be without Ringo? Where would Nirvana be without Grohl? There are all these pivotal characters, that’s really what I want to bring to this band. Now I have a second chance to come back and relive the journey. I’m excited to just give it my all and try to just keep getting better. I’m excited to play the new songs because it’s a new era for the band. I can’t wait for people to hear the new stuff. We are stoked about it!

Check out Zac’s drummer profile page, at moderndrummer.com

Brann Dailor


prophet '08
Mellotron

Jimmy Hubbard



Mastodon's Modern Metal Master

By Mark Griffith

Brann Dailor is an interesting drummer. He was brought up around musicians, and it wasn't a question of if he was going to play music. It was a question of what instrument would he choose to play? His interest was piqued in the drums around 4 or 5 years old. His Uncle Mark played in a band called Cinnamon Road and his mom's boyfriend played drums too. The die was set. Brann's influences range from Mikkey Dee to Billy Cobham, and from Bill Ward to Sean Reinhart. He likes to listen to 80's pop music from India and Turkey, and John Zorn. He sings very well, and (of course) he is an amazing drummer. He has also been in more bands than I can even remember: Maniacal Rage, Evisceration, Lethargy, Gaylord, Today is the Day, Arcadea, and of course Mastodon. In fact, those bands and his evolution as a drummer is why I wanted to talk to Brann.

BD: I remember always wanting to go to my grandparents' house because there were drums there. My Uncle would put me behind the kit. He had a record player close by with a bunch of records by Deep Purple, Rainbow, Nazareth, and Black Sabbath. He would put on a record, put the headphones on me, and tell me to play along. I could actually keep a beat, so he was impressed. Everyone in my family wanted to hear me play, so that was quite validating. You have to have cool parents if you want to play the drums, because they are loud and there's no volume knob. My mom and dad were really encouraging.

MD: Did your uncle teach you anything about playing?

BD: I painted an entire fence at his house once, in exchange he gave me one drum lesson, that taught me "something." After that I remember playing along to a Police song in my dad's car, and him being sort of impressed. He asked me if I wanted to take lessons and I took one lesson at the Hochstein School (in Rochester.) There were two drum sets in a room, and as soon as I walked in, I began playing. The teacher came in and put me on a pad playing RLRL for an hour. That was boring, and it felt like school (which I hated.) Looking back, I probably wasn't ready for lessons at that point, I was only seven and too young to comprehend that I needed to learn the fundamentals. But that really sucked all the fun out of it for me. I think at that point the drums were my preferred toy, I wasn't thinking about playing music, being in a band, or a career in drumming, I just wanted to have fun.

MD: I think there is an important lesson in there for parents and aspiring drum teachers.

BD: At that point my grandparents got divorced, and we moved into their house. They had left an old Rogers Sky Blue Ripple kit there, the set had two cinder blocks for legs, the hi hat didn't have a clutch, the snare drum had no snares or a bottom head. The toms were held on with duct tape. But I loved that kit, it was the coolest kit in the world. Every day I would come home from school and go up into the attic and play drums. While all my friends were playing video games, I was busy playing the drums. When I was 13, my mom got me a white Pearl kit, because I had shown her that even with my very limited resources, I was progressing as a drummer. Having that kit really jumpstarted my desire to really dig in and play drums. That's when I started to own the moniker of being "A Drummer!" But the problem was I didn't know anyone else who played an instrument.

MD: There are many more "lessons" in that answer as well. How long was it until you formed your first band?

BD: Not too long. I was 13 or 14 and in eighth grade. I knew some other kids who played instruments, and we were all into Metallica and Slayer. At that point in life the big question is whether you were

Jimmy Hubbard

going to play sports or music?

My first band was called Maniacal Rage, and we played bad versions of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and stuff like that. Eventually I moved to New York City to live with my dad, and everything as far as drumming was concerned sort of stopped. My dad had heard tapes of my playing, and he really wanted me to continue. I tried to join the Drummer Collective, but it was too expensive. You had to be pretty loaded to afford a rehearsal space in NYC, because you couldn't practice drums in an apartment. I don't know (even today) how people do it. I can remember feeling like my grip on playing the drums was slipping away. I moved back to Rochester when I was 17 to help my mom out financially. When I got there, the first order of business was (the band) Evisceration.

Jimmy Hubbard

Evisceration was fairly straightforward death metal. The leader was into gore and serial killers and that whole scene which was popular around that time. Cannibal Corpse, who were still living in Buffalo, for example, was a big influence. Our music was reminiscent of the earlier Death records like *Spiritual Healing*. At the time I was just figuring out how to play in a band and be in a band with other people. The band was cool, but it fizzled, and I really wanted to do something else musically. I was listening to Mr. Bungle and John Zorn at the time, and Evisceration seemed a little pedestrian.

MD: How did you get into John Zorn?

BD: I had a copy of John Zorn *Naked City*, and it was just weird-crazy-cool. A girl gave me a copy of the first Mr. Bungle record. That record blew my mind, and really changed my musical trajectory. I thought it was the most amazing thing ever. I read the liner notes to learn that John Zorn had produced and was playing saxophone on it, from there I just started looking for John Zorn Masada records at Tower Records. Zorn's music led me to Bill Laswell, his music led me to Material, and that led to my fascination with world music.

MD: I can see how metal and John Zorn could go together, but I never hear any of the metal drummers talk about Zorn.

Every day I would come home from school and go up into the attic and play drums. While all my friends were playing video games, I was busy playing the drums.

BD: The early 90's were a pretty cool time for music, there was so much diversity, but metal was a "bad word" at the time. I was into all sorts of stuff. I was listening to Dead Can Dance and Cocteau Twins at the same time that I was listening to King Diamond and Mercyful Fate.

MD: The next band that you joined was Lethargy, what was the difference between Evisceration and Lethargy?

BD: There was a popular death metal band in Rochester called Matricore. Their guitar player was a guy named Eric Burke, he had a song he wanted me to play drums on, so we got together and jammed. He was a very technical guitarist and a very interesting style that I fell in love with. We tried to fold the influence of all of those bands (Mr. Bungle, Dead Can Dance, Cocteau Twins, King Diamond, Mercyful Fate) into Lethargy. We were pretty successful around Rochester.

MD: How did Lethargy turn into Gaylord?

BD: They were happening simultaneously. Those two guys were big Lethargy fans, and they wanted me to play drums in their band, so I did. Guitarist Corey Adams was really into funk and some different music, and that band let me explore and play a whole different style of drumming. I think for any musician it's important to jam with as many people as possible, but to also tap into as many different styles of music as possible.

At that point in time, I had discovered Peter Gabriel's Real World Records label. I had also bought a copy of Peter Gabriel's record called *Passion Sources*. Gabriel had done the soundtrack to the *Last Temptation of Christ*, and I loved that soundtrack. But the *Passion Sources* record was his musical inspiration for the soundtrack. It was almost like he had gone out and recorded music from the middle of nowhere, in the desert, and in the jungles. It was music that was performed without any consideration to fame and fortune.

I had always been attracted to the sound of the Arabic scale, Turkish music, and various Middle Eastern music. I really like to listen to 80's pop music from India and Turkey. Their recordings are always a little distorted, and they are made without all of the modern bells and whistles, that yields some interesting sound palettes, and crazy keyboard sounds. There was a compilation called *Yalla: Hit List Egypt* that I loved! During that entire period of my life, I was devouring any world music that I could find. I was walking into record stores and making a beeline for the World Music section. That Arabic scale sound comes up all of the time in Mastodon music, especially in the riffs that I write.

I love drums and drumming, but playing drums isn't always the focal point for me. Because I have a busier approach to drums, people don't always see that for me it's really about the song. I blame my busier style of drumming on Eric Burke of Lethargy. We didn't have a bassist in that band, and he had a very busy style of playing guitar. I just started following him by playing what he played on my toms. He was all over the place, and I just went right along with him.

Jimmy Hubbard

MD: How does the band Today is the Day fit into your whole evolution?

BD: Lethargy was sputtering a bit, I was 22 and all my friends were making their moves. I was working some little jobs, and Eric got a job at Kodak, so he was all set. We had sent a demo to a bunch of record companies, and there was no interest. The reason there was no interest was because a band gets signed because the band has already gone out and laid the groundwork. We hadn't done that, I know that now. We were driving our van down to NJ to do a couple of shows, and staying in the Holmdel Motor Lodge, and we thought we were "on tour." But we weren't, we were just partying.

Then my friend Dave Witte, who plays drums for Municipal Waste and has played drums for millions of bands in the past, called me to tell me that he was recommending me to Steve Austin from Today is the Day. They invited me to audition for the band, a friend of mine with a Volkswagen bus volunteered to drive me there. I got the gig, I got Bill Kelliher to play bass for the band (Kelliher is now the guitarist for Mastodon.) We wrote and recorded *In the Eyes of God* for Relapse Records in about a month, and we went on tour. That was the first time that there seemed like a chance that I could play the drums and be in a band as a career. Of course, we weren't making any money and we were living in a recording studio. But I saw the possibilities.

MD: How did your experience in Today is the Day lead to the creation of Mastodon?

BD: Steve was married and lived with his wife. Bill and I lived at the studio, and we had a lot of down time. Bill was actually a guitarist who was just playing bass in Today is the Day. Our focus was Today is the Day, but in our downtime, we were constantly putting together our own songs and writing other music. The band sort of blew up and things got unfriendly in the middle of a European tour, and Bill and I decided that it would be best if we started something of our own. I thought it might be a step backwards to move back to Rochester, and Bill wanted to move to Atlanta with his girlfriend, so we moved to Atlanta. We met Brent [Hinds] within a couple of weeks and he already knew Troy [Sanders]. We jammed for a bit, and we wrote two or three songs in that first day. I knew we had something special.

> I think for any musician it's important to jam with as many people as possible, but to also tap into as many different styles of music as possible.

We were taking that Thin Lizzy dual

guitar attack and repurposing it and we were mixing that with those Melvins, Neurosis, Voivod chords. On top of all of that, we were all listening to a lot of prog like Yes, King Crimson, and early Genesis, and we all liked each other. I felt that we were going to have to put in five years of constant and really hard work. At that point all of the prog bands that were around were very clean and pristine. We wanted to utilize those prog templates, but we wanted it to sound heavy, nasty, and dirty.

MD: At the beginning were you guys on the same scene as Dillinger Escape Plan with Chris Pennie, and Candiria with Ken Schalk? It sounds like you were all doing similar things.

BD: We played with both of them in Today is the Day a bunch. Candiria and Ken were amazing, and Chris and Dillinger were insanely good. I think we were all coming from basically the same place musically. I always thought Dillinger was a little derivative of Human Remains, who sounded like Ripping Corpse. I was really tracing the evolution of the New Jersey bizzaro metal scene. I found that scene had its roots in bands like Atheist, Cynic, Death's *Human*, early Meshuggah, and maybe even that Fredrik Thorendal record *Sol Niger Within* with drummer Morgan Agren.

MD: It sounds like you were really doing your "musical homework." How long did it take Mastodon to really take off?

BD: Five years, my five-year plan worked out. We formed in 2000, and by 2005 we were playing Ozzfest, we had recorded *Leviathan*, toured with Slayer and Slipknot, we had management, and were talking to major labels.

MD: Have you always sung? You are a very good singer, and there still aren't many singing drummers around?

BD: From the beginning I would go in and lay down vocal templates for Troy or Brent. I didn't sing on record until 2009, when we did *Crack the Skye*. For the song "Oblivion" I went in and sang a template for Troy, and Brent really liked the way that I sang it. Brendan O' Brien didn't want me to sing. I remember him saying, "The last thing that I want, is for the first vocal that is heard on this album to come from *the drummer*." And I agreed. We got real close on that tune with Troy singing. Brent liked my version, and Troy was cool with it, so Brendan reluctantly agreed, and I sang it.

Jimmy Hubbard

There is nothing wrong with dialing it back a notch, recordings are filled with compromise. I always ask for input, if there is something that I feel strongly about, I'll fight for it...

A lot of our vocals are very percussive in the way that they sit over a riff. When I sing, I think of the vocals as another drum. I know that a specific syllable should be landing on the snare (for example.)

MD: Whenever I have sung, it was always hard for me to move enough air while I was sitting down. Did that ever give you a problem?

BD: Yes, PLENTY! I don't think I sang very good for the first year, I had a lot of figuring out to do. Once I recorded "Oblivion" I had to really learn how to play and sing. I treat it as another limb that you are folding into the mix. It's polyrhythmic, and that's how you have to treat it. Syllables have to land in certain spots, and you have to figure that out in your mind's eye, just like learning a new beat. And I would say that in-ears are a must.

> I play a very bastardized version of jazz-fusion and I have always been more of a hands guy than a feet guy.

MD: As I listen to your drumming on Mastodon's different records, I have heard your playing evolve. How do you think your drumming has evolved with the band?

BD: I play to what is provided in the song. When we work with a producer, they usually tell me to scale it back, a lot. And maybe that's what I need to hear. When it comes time to record, lots of times I don't sound like 100% myself. There is nothing wrong with dialing it back a notch, recordings are filled with compromise. I always ask for input, if there is something that I feel strongly about, I'll fight for it, but at the end of the day, the song matters more than me getting some crazy fills in there. Some of my favorite "drum moments" have gone by the wayside because I didn't want to cloud up the vision of the song. I think one big way that I have evolved over the years is that I have learned how to make those choices. It's a fine line, I don't want to lose myself and just sit there and "meat and potato it," I want to be me. Thankfully, a lot of the producers that we have worked with know that lots of people listen to our band because of the crazy drumming that is happening.

MD: Can you remember any specific tunes when you were asked to dial it back?

BD: There were some tunes on *Crack the Skye* that I had to pull things back. I had a lot more fills in "Oblivion" at first. I had to be told at the beginning of that one to chill and sink into the mood of the tune. Of course, a lot of that advice came from Brendan O' Brien, and when you are in the room with someone like that, you listen to them and trust them. I learned a lot from him.

MD: What else did you learn from him?

BD: He taught us about song structure and lyrics. He told me that I could be as esoteric as I wanted to be in the verses, but when it came to the chorus, I should be more personal and connect with the listener and bring them into the story. He had me read my lyrics to him, *without* singing them. He always said that you should be able to read your lyrics aloud without being embarrassed. He made me dig deeper into myself than I really wanted.

When I played the big fill in "Quintessence" from *Crack the Skye*, Brendan also told me that was the fill that was going to get me on the cover of *Modern Drummer*. And I was on the cover of *Modern Drummer* after that album.

> There is some stuff on Remission that I'm not sure if I could even figure out and go back and play.

MD: I love that you released *Crack the Skye* without the vocals as an instrumental release along with the vocal version, why did you do that?

BD: That was Nick John's idea. He felt that there was a lot of layered ear candy on that record. However, when the vocals were laid on top, people were going to miss a lot of that ear candy. I loved the vocals, but I thought releasing the instrumental version was a cool idea.

MD: Speaking of instrumentals, where idea the idea of doing the soundtrack to the film *Jonah Hex* come from?

BD: Josh Homme hooked us up with Jimmy (the director of the film.) We had just gotten off a three-month tour with Metallica, and I was really sick. But we went in and watched the film, improvised, and wrote riffs to the movie. There wasn't a lot of pressure for that, and we weren't as married to the project as we would have been for a Mastodon record, it wasn't as "precious" to us. So it felt more loosey-goosey.

MD: Maybe that's why it's so good. It is possible to be too emotionally invested in a project.

BD: Absolutely. You can get lost in trying to get everything perfect.

MD: The time even felt looser on that.

BD: It was because I was also really sick too. I have done some of my best shows when I have been deathly ill.

MD: So have I. It's amazing how that works, I think it's because you are just not thinking when you are sick, you are just thinking about getting back to the hotel and going to bed. Who are some of your favorite drummers?

BD: My Uncle Mark would be first and foremost. Mickey Dee, Nicko McBrain, Clive Burr, I have always loved Iron Maiden. Dave Lombardo, Charlie Benante, Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Art Blakey, Max Roach…

MD: How did the jazz influences come to you?

BD: My dad was always playing John Coltrane *A Love Supreme*, and I fell in love with that. That led to everything else. I love Miles' *Bitches Brew*, Zappa with Bozzio, Mahavishnu Orchestra *Inner Mounting Flame*. Overall, I am some kind of a cross between Billy Cobham and Mikkey Dee. I play a very bastardized version of jazz-fusion and I have always been more of a hands guy than a feet guy.

The early Sabbath records when Bill Ward playing "jazz drums" on those songs, were also hugely important to me!

Bill was a jazz guy, because if you were going to play drums in the 50s, you played jazz. Rock and metal drumming didn't exist yet. Bill was coming out of Krupa and the big band thing. As much as I love a drummer like Vinnie Paul, I feel that I have much more in common with someone like Bill Ward.

Jimmy Hubbard

A few years ago, I learned the first three Black Sabbath records front to back for a tribute show on Halloween. I learned songs like "Rat Salad" and "The Wizard" note for note. Those tunes and drum performances were definitely tailored for small venues though, there is a lot going on drum-wise in those tunes that would get lost in a stadium, they are all really hard. Bill's imagination was on full display on those first three Black Sabbath records, you can hear his mind at work. He is searching for a cooler way to do "it."

Then there is a slow tune and that amazing groove on "Snowblind." I really try to tap into my inner "Snowblind" whenever I play a slow tune like that. I actually got to have dinner and hang with Bill for a while, and he told me that if he had to choose a drummer to fill his shoes in Black Sabbath it would be me. That was incredible to hear and was one of the nicest things that anybody has ever said to me.

MD: How cool is that!
I can hear similarities between his improvisional approach, and your approach on *Remission*. That is a loose record.

BD: There were a lot of happy accidents on that record. And there is some stuff on *Remission* that I'm not sure if I could even figure out and go back and play.

MD: What music have you been listening to lately?

BD: There is a singer songwriter named Tamino, there isn't much drumming on the record, but I love it. He's sort of like a middle eastern Jeff Buckley. Mario from Gojira sent me Tamino's song "Intervals" a few years ago, and I've been listening to him ever since. I have also been listening to Burnt by the Sun with my friend Dave Witte playing drums, that has led me back to Death, Obituary and Cynic again.

MD: Were you into Sean Reinhart's drumming?

BD: I am a HUGE fan of Sean's playing! The first time I saw him play, they were opening for Cannibal Corpse, and Sean was set up sideways so you could stand behind him and watch him play. That was life changing. I went home and immediately started to "try" and emulate his drumming. Later we got to play with Cynic on a festival, and I got to have *my moment* of telling him how great he was. Nobody wants to stand and listen to someone tell them how great they are, I know I don't. But Sean indulged me and let me tell him how amazing he was. He inspired so many drummers to be more creative behind the kit. Cynic's *Focus* and Death *Human* rendered the rest of my music library obsolete for about two years.

MD: What is coming up for you and Mastodon?

BD: We are going to start kicking the tires on some new Mastodon in the new year. I actually just put out a coffee table book of clown drawings that I did during lockdown, it's called *Brann Dailor's 101 Clowns of the Corona Virus.* I also just did a new Arcadea record with my old friends from Gaylord, I just have to go in and do the vocals, I'm really involved in this new Arcadea record, it's going to be cool. Mastodon and Gojira will be co-headlining an extensive Mega-Monsters USA tour in 2023 in April and May and then again in August and September.

Check out Brann's drummer profile page, at moderndrummer.com

Mark Kelso

Expect the Unexpected

By Bob Girouard

Mark Kelso is not your typical Canadian or your typical drummer. He doesn't follow hockey, root for The Toronto Maple Leafs, live on poutine, or eat all of his meals at Tim Hortons. However, after getting over that initial shock, you'll find that this Toronto resident is not only a very well-rounded musician, he's the drummer extraordinaire for the kick-ass band, The Jazz Exiles. And not only does Mark Kelso lead, play drums, and produce the band's recordings, he also composes for the band.

The Jazz Exiles current line-up has been together for five years, so their sound is even tighter, punchier and more cohesive than on the previous two recordings (*Elementals* and *Stealing from My Youth*.) The Jazz Exiles feature the all-star talents of Canadian bass virtuoso Rich Brown, Cuban-born alto sax player Luis Deniz, guitar whiz Elmer Ferrer and Jeremy Ledbetter on piano & keyboards. These players bring Mark's compositions to a whole new level, and bring big smiles to the faces of their fans.

On their new album, *The Dragon's Tail*, you can put all of that Canadian politeness and gentility aside. Mark showcases his Afro-Cuban and Brazilian influences playing with a muscular edge complete with lightning single and double strokes, flams, and intensity. Sounding like a perennial combination of Carlos Vega, Steve Gadd and Vinnie Colaiuta. Kelso is equal part groove and fire.

The secret to Kelso and The Jazz Exiles' success is their collective musical maturity that is sowing the seeds of musical exploration and creativity. The band has been nominated for two Juno Awards (the Canadian equivalent to the Grammy's,) and coming out of the constrictions of the pandemic, Mark and the band expect to be mainstays of the 2023 jazz festival circuit playing the Toronto Jazz Fest, the Montreal Jazz Fest, and the Rochester Jazz Fest.

Harrison King

MD: Mark, congrats on a super piece of work, *The Dragon's Tail*.

MK: Thanks.

MD: The opening track, "A Happy Life" is filled with both groove and polyrhythmic combustion. I caught a YouTube version and thought it was a very impressive track, especially the musical interplay within the band. I can hear why it's the lead cut. The band is sounding somewhere between Return to Forever, Spyro Gyra, and Weather Report.

MK: I grew up watching Spyro Gyra every summer at the Toronto Jazz Festival. Return to Forever? I was a huge Chick Corea fan. Weather Report was a major, major, influence on me. I loved all their records. I kind of fashioned The Jazz Exiles after Weather Report, The Yellowjackets, and Pat Metheny.

MD: With the new album, *The Dragon's Tail*, you allude to "leaving something behind." Could you speak about that?

MK: It's influenced by martial arts icon, Bruce Lee. It was the theme from one of his movies: *The Way of The Dragon*. He talked about the dragon spinning its tail. In mythology and folklore, one is more afraid of the dragon's claws and fire breath. However, the tail lurks behind as a deadly weapon that comes out of nowhere to strike, I suppose it's a metaphor to just being aware of the things you can't see. Which (to me) means always be aware of your surroundings, either in a musical or non-musical format. I also perceive it as expect the unexpected.

MD: You've backed so many marquee artists in your career. Are there any particular ones that stand out?

MK: Oh yeah. It was a dream come true when I toured with Canadian pop-rocker, Gino Vanelli. One of his earlier drummer's (Graham Lear,) is a dear friend who also played twelve years with Santana after the Gino gig. And playing with Pat Metheny was a thrill beyond thrills. I feel he's the greatest living jazz guitarist.

YAMAHA
YAMAHA
SUBKICK

Harrison King

Playing with him was over the top. He was very nice, with no attitude. It went as good as I could have wished. It was pretty amazing.

MD: Your current sidemen in Jazz Exiles seem like more than just sidemen. They're adding to the music with exceptional virtuosity.

MK: I hand-picked these guys. I've been playing with Rich (bassist) for about 30 years, and with Jeremy (piano) for about 15. Elmer (guitar) and I have played together for 10 years, and Luis (sax) and I have been playing together about 15 years. I also work with all of them in multiple bands. They are good friends but specifically they are excellent musicians. I write music with them in mind because I know their abilities far exceed their limitations. It's a joy to play with guys this great on every gig. Every musician in the band is a "leader" in their own right.

MD: You are a terrific composer, what is the trick to writing a good fusion song? Melody, open space for call and response?

MK: I do all the writing. It's kind of trial by fire. I find some chord changes that I like, or a bass pattern or a rhythm. All those melodies are actually coming from me singing. Because I sing it first, I think it connects me to the melody in the same way that a singer connects to a pop tune. I'm very liberal with whoever plays the melody. Everybody has got a distinct melodic voice, so I really want to characterize that in terms of tones and textures. As a young kid I played saxophone which helped me understand when to take a breath.

MD: Let's talk about the rhythmic structure of *The Dragon's Tail*. Your drumming is exceptional. It's clean, precise, with plenty of feel, and you never over play. Looking back, drum-wise what were you going for on the album?

MK: I've been influenced by so many musicians I've played with over the years, rhythmically I get a lot of my ideas from African and Cuban drummers. I'm really on an Afro-Cuban vibe, which tends to influence me rhythmically. On the album, there's rhythms I've learned from African, Brazilian, and Afro-Cuban music. Anybody can play patterns, but to apply it to a musical setting, and make it work and sound good, that takes a much higher skill set.

MD: My favorite cuts are, "Slingshot," (a Samba variation,) "The Huntress," the ballad "A Moment in Time," and the adrenaline-soaked "Serpentine Figures."

MK: "The Huntress" was written specifically for our guitarist, Elmer. He starts-off slow and tender, but by the end of the song he's ripping! "Serpentine Figures" was a song that I wanted the guitar to pick up the melody and let it just go. When you have a specific person and individual style to write for, it really makes it a lot easier to convey your musical ideas.

MD: You align your solos and play deftly over the rhythm section. Your solos are crisp, clean, and innovative. What drummers inspired you and continue to inspire you today?

MK: My dad, Sam Kelso, was a drummer so I grew up around drums. He played in an Irish show band. Eventually, he started to teach me. He was a big Buddy Rich fan, and in turn, I became one myself. He was so good. Watching how cleanly Buddy played his snare drum I began thinking that he had to be some sort of an alien. His power and velocity, it was nothing short of brilliance. When I saw him live, I wanted to sound like that. Then, I got into Steve Gadd, Carlos Vega, Vinnie Colaiuta, Peter Erskine, Billy Cobham, Manu Katche' and Jim Keltner. These guys all have beautiful technique. I definitely owe them all a lot of debt for being such good influences.

MD: Let's talk gear. Drum-wise, are you still 100% Yamaha equipped?

MK: Yes, here's what I'm using at present. My drums are red Yamaha Maple Hybrid's. The sizes are 10", 12", 14", 16" toms, with a 16 x 22 bass drum. All of my hardware is Yamaha too. My cymbals: are all Paiste. I am using a 16" Traditional thin crash, 20" Bluebird ride, 10" 2002 splash, 22" Master's Collection Dark Ride, 18" Formula 602 thin crash, and a 22" Master's Swish with a 14" inverted PST X Swiss Flanger on top. For heads I am using Evans coated G1's on toms, coated G1 on snare and a coated EMAD on the bass drum. My sticks are Mark Kelso signature series made by Headhunters.

Anybody can play patterns, but to apply it to a musical setting, and make it work and sound good, that takes a much higher skill set.

MD: You mentioned singing when you compose, you don't *just* sing to compose. I saw your video, a re-do of The Carpenters "Close to You" that you made for your 22nd wedding anniversary. Nice arrangement, nice playing, and nice singing too!

MK: {Laughs} You saw that, huh? It began at the beginning of Covid. I was singing to basically entertain myself. It was nearing our anniversary date and I thought why don't I do something cute for my wife?

MD: I'm sure you won some points with it, especially since it went world-wide via YouTube! Everyone can watch the playing and the singing **here**. Nice touch!

Check out Mark's drummer profile page, at moderndrummer.com

The Four Practice Pockets

#1 Release Your INTUITION

By Chris Lesso

"Good practice is fluid and adaptable, it mirrors nature."

The IREC practice model (*Modern Drummer* Dec. '22) is when we use the four practice pockets of Intuition, Reps, Edges, and Celebration to get more out of the time we have behind the kit. What the IREC practice model isn't, is a rigid model of practice. We're all different, with individual dreams and goals. Any practice model that can't flow like water is a failure. Every day is different, you are even different from the "you" of yesterday! Even if you can only find three minutes of practice, as long as you pick up the sticks and connect with your favorite music, you'll go to bed knowing you got 1% better. When we get a block of focused time (small as it may be,) the four IREC practice pockets become essential to the art of learning. Over the next few issues, we'll dive deeper into each pocket.

ONE POCKET PRACTICES

How would it look to put all your focus and energy into one pocket at a time? You may have a leering deadline to hit, or you may just need to feed your soul by shaking things up. Sometimes we purposely go out of balance to get back in balance. Becoming the shape of water looks different every day, always formless and never rigid. Since we don't ever want to be stuck in static systems endorsed by the classical mess of tradition, we need a guide that flows as we do. This process is the science, art, and mystery of learning the craft that we love. Going deep into only one pocket steers us a little closer to our true north. It gets us closer to who we will become on this journey that we're crafting.

INTUITION: THE FLOW PRACTICE

There's a kid's game called "random lines." This is where you take a piece of paper and draw a line anywhere on the page. Then, you pass it to the next person, and they draw another line connected to the first. This process is repeated as the paper is being passed. It only takes a few passes for the strokes to start taking on unexpected shapes, like when you stare at clouds and suddenly see a dragon.

Our flow practice is the process of creating random "lines" on the drums. It's a constant balance of exploring and avoiding too many or too few ideas. When we do this, we are letting go and surrendering to what the "flow" asks you to play. We are not trying to control the flow, but we are guiding it. The goal is to give your intuition a voice, empowering your ideas with the gift of freedom to see where it leads. This practice feeds the soul by tapping into why we play drums in the first place. This practice gives yourself permission to intentionally spend time welcoming whatever surfaces.

I've seen this in action in the playing of my mentor Dom Famularo. His enthusiastic drum artistry made a massive impact on the direction of my life and the standards I keep. This impact continues today. When Dom plays a solo, he doesn't know what he's about to play. He stands right at the edge of the cliff of his abilities; *almost*, but never falling. Dom is playing from the heart, in the moment, he is standing strong in the wilderness of raw improvised creativity. If you watch Dom or anyone else performing from this zone, you're seeing the end result of what they worked on in the practice room. They have prepared exactly for this moment by spending focused time on reps, edges, and celebration, so they don't have to

consciously think. Anyone who does this is playing from a place of expression and joy, they are truly owning the now. This takes an amazing amount of courage. It will be thrilling and/or daunting, it will reveal strengths and weaknesses.

The flow practice targets ideas that are wanting to come out, giving us space to sculpt them until they're fully formed and clear. It takes time to harness raw creativity from the space where inspiration lives. Doing this in the practice room gives you the luxury of having time to fully explore each idea as long as you want, and then unleashing this spirit to the stage when needed! This is your time to really get inside the creations and concepts that make you, YOU. Stay curious!

"Stay hungry, stay foolish."
–Steve Jobs

The flow practice is balance through action in real time. Skateboarding, surfing, tightrope walking (and drumming) all embody forward motion without falling. Too little effort is boring because there's no risk, but too much effort breaks the spell and pulls us out of flow. Walking the line between stretching and snapping the tightrope is the magical sweet spot.

However, trying to force a flow state is like giving marching orders to a cat. Good luck! What is in your control is to create the right conditions for a flow state to happen, then begin playing. You'll have good days and bad. Doing this type of practice always brings a return of massive value. We're training ourselves to be comfortable living on the creative edge while striving to speak (play) new ideas with clarity, as they appear.

Going boldly into these unexplored areas is like digging for unpolished pieces of gold that are buried deep in the earth. These unexplored areas can offer a wellspring of creative ideas. What you discover didn't come from a book, a course, or anywhere else… It came from YOU. What can be more valuable than that?

Turning this raw material into something solid and effortless can be a slow and tedious process, but that's the work that reveals the ideas that live close to your heart. One overall mission of practice is to chip away at the "unessential's" one fragment at a time. A few hours spent exploring your INTUITION can retrieve years of material to sharpen and hone. But this will only happen for those brave enough to walk through the door.

When you get off track, repeat the LTR mantra: "Don't Compete, CREATE!"

Principles of the Flow Practice: Don't stop! Keep the flow going at all costs. Don't judge what's happening. Eventually the inner critic will quiet.

Always: Stay curious. Stay in the moment. Breathe!

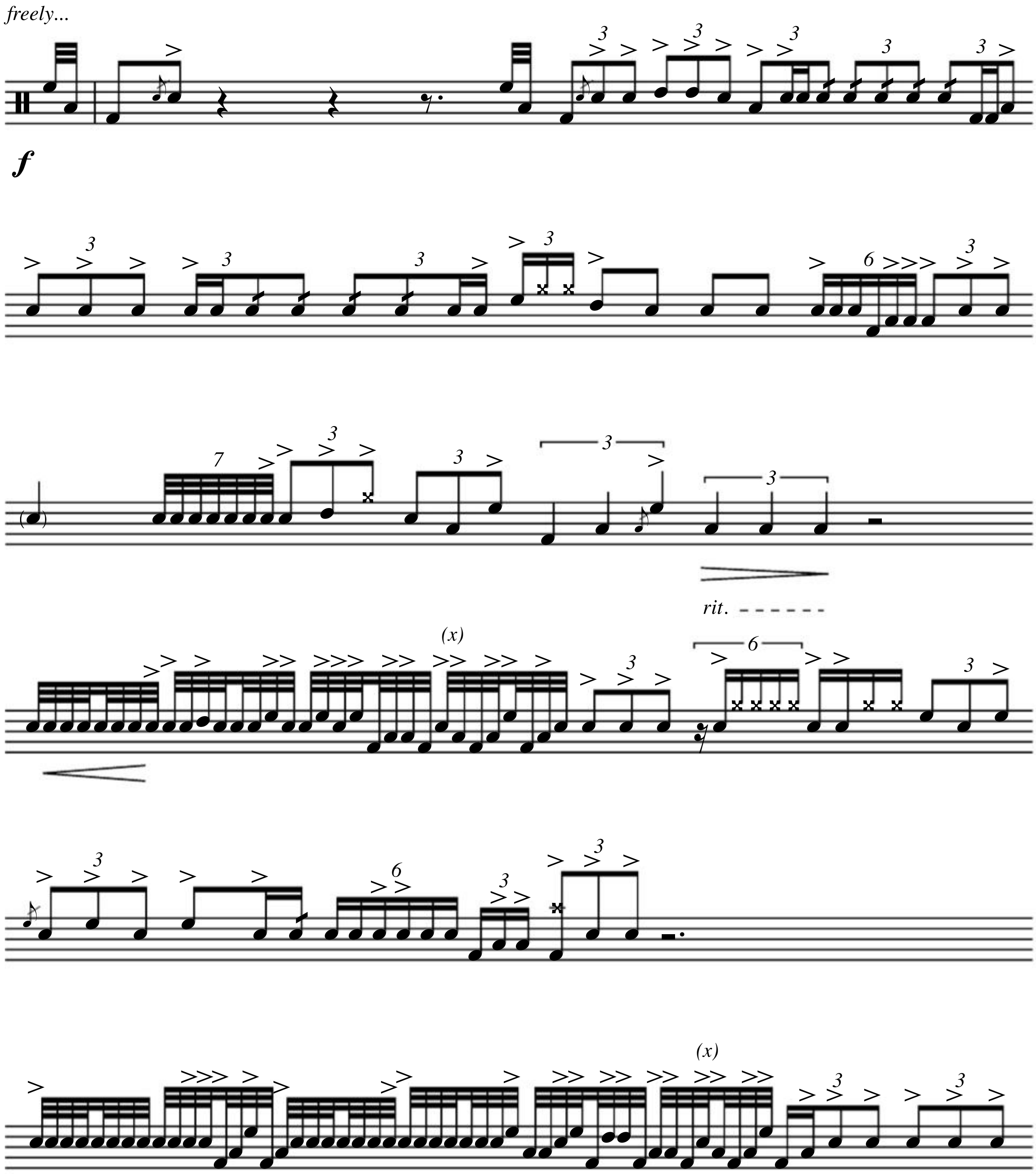
Check out Chris's *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

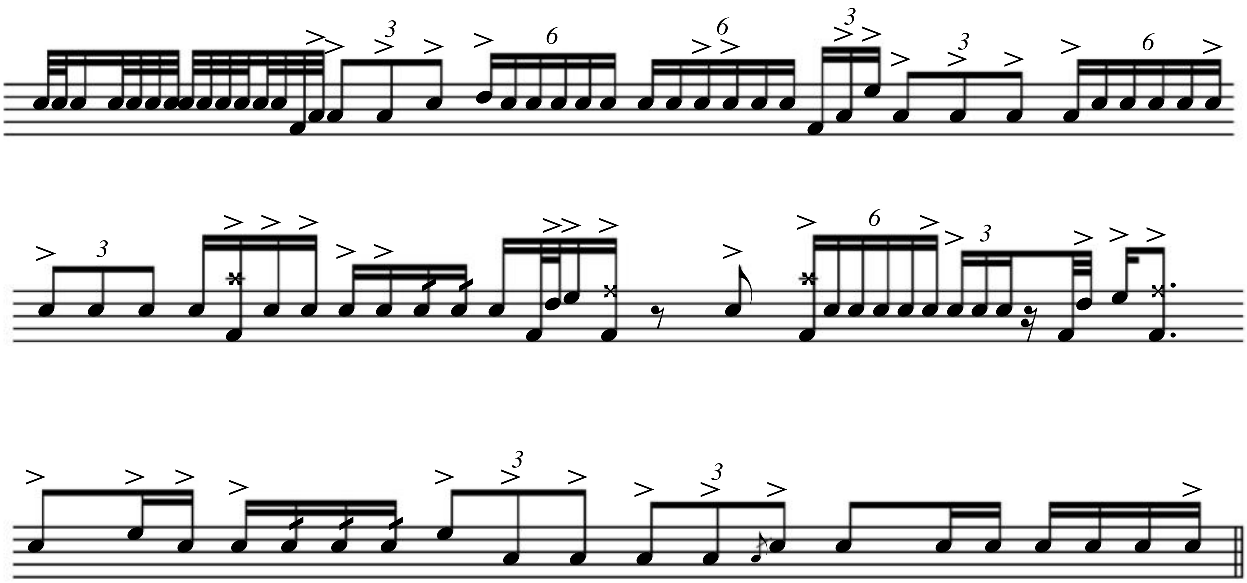
Pat Petrillo's drum solo on "Runnin"

Transcription by Terry Branam

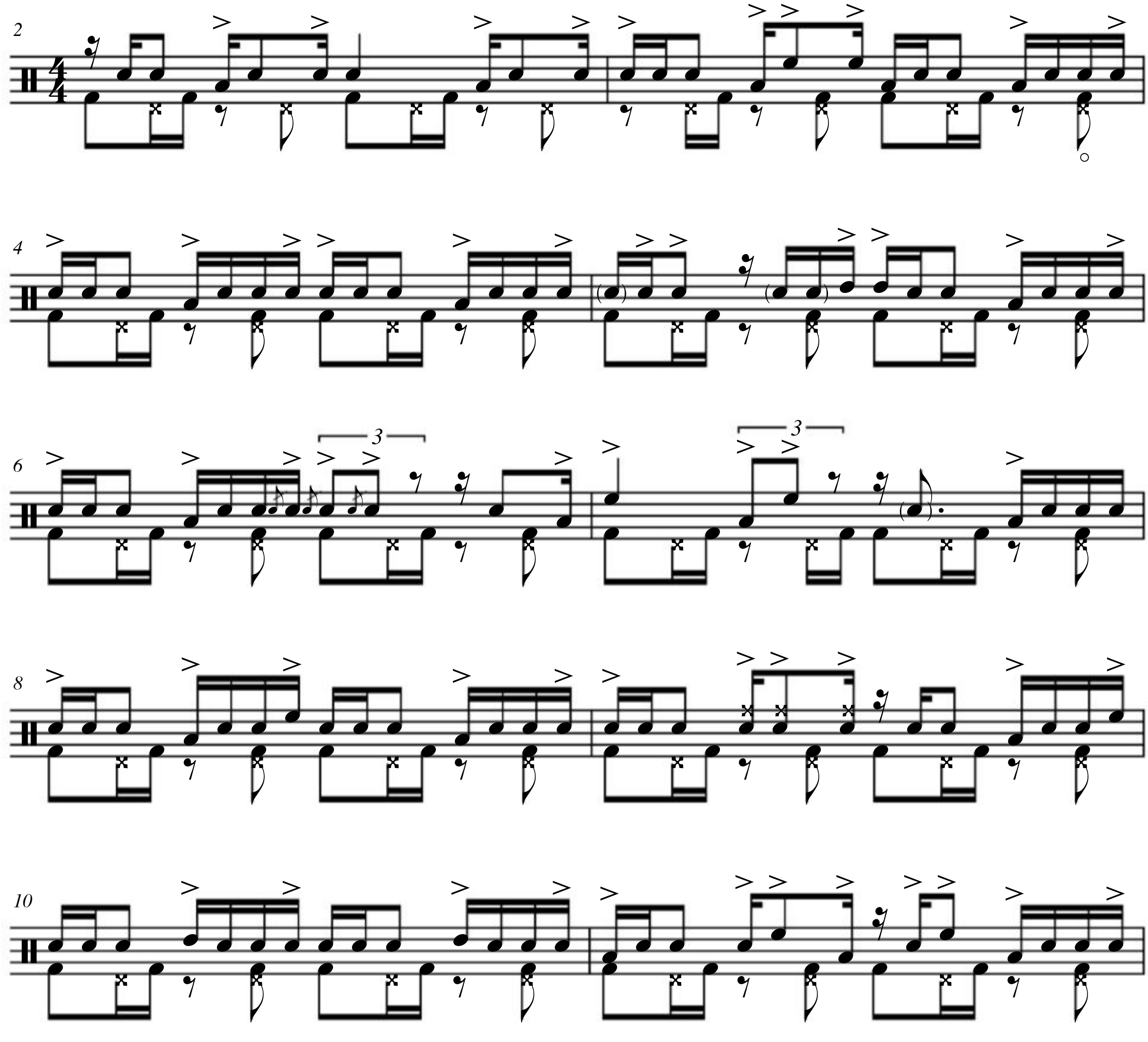
This month's transcription is Pat Petrillo's solo on the song "Runnin'" from his recording Pat Petrillo: The Big Rhythm Band, *The Power Station Sessions*. He explains, "We do a cool version of Earth Wind and Fire's "Runnin'." They were in heavy rotation on my record player at an early age. "Runnin'" is a track that I always loved, it was one of the first times that I ever heard a samba, and it happened to be on Earth Wind, & Fire's *All 'n All.*

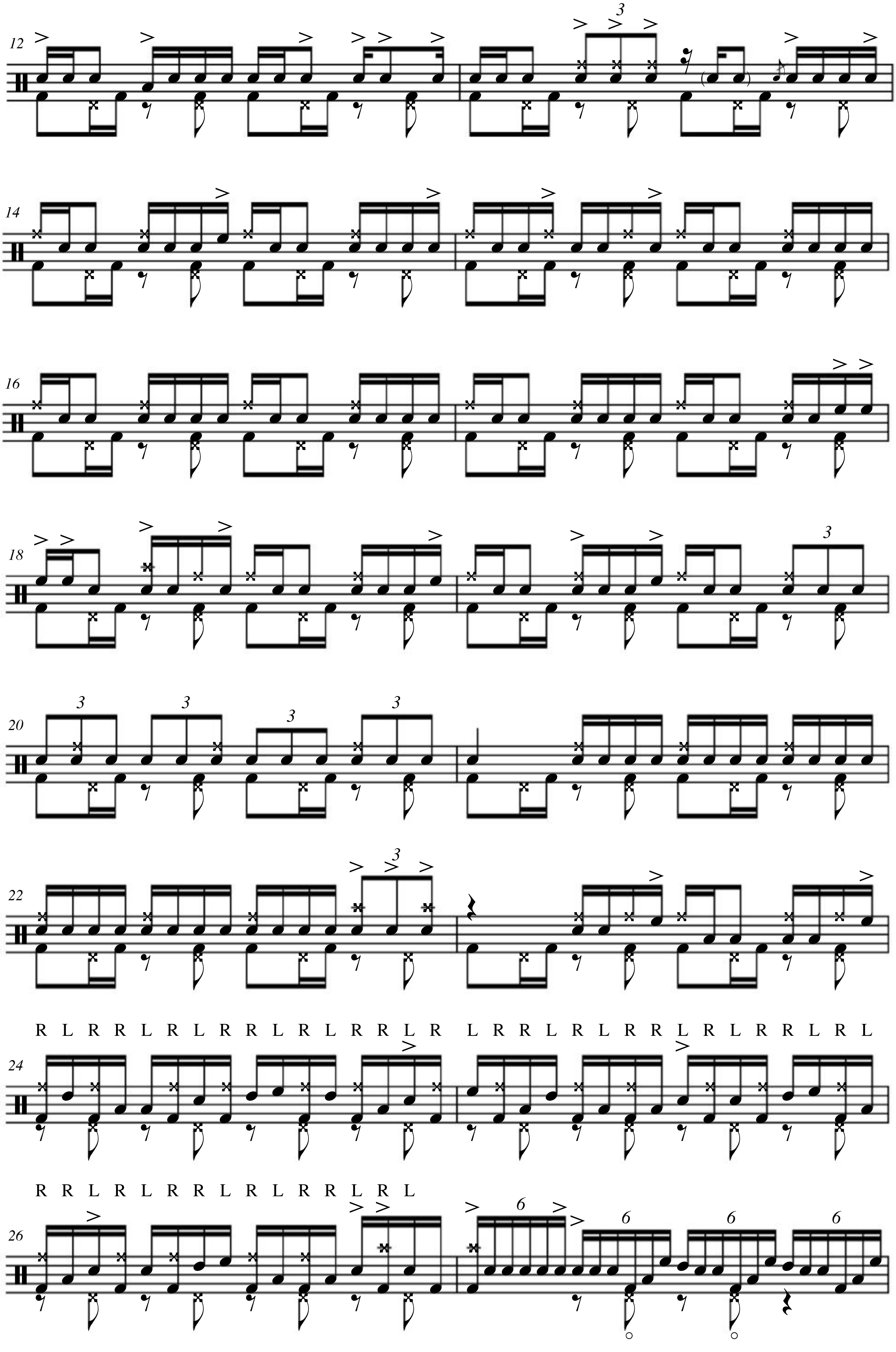
Towards the of end of my version of the tune, I took this solo, and it was "first take, only take!" I had intended to do a couple takes then "pick and slice" as many drummers do, but this just flowed naturally in context, so what you hear is what went down, with no edits!

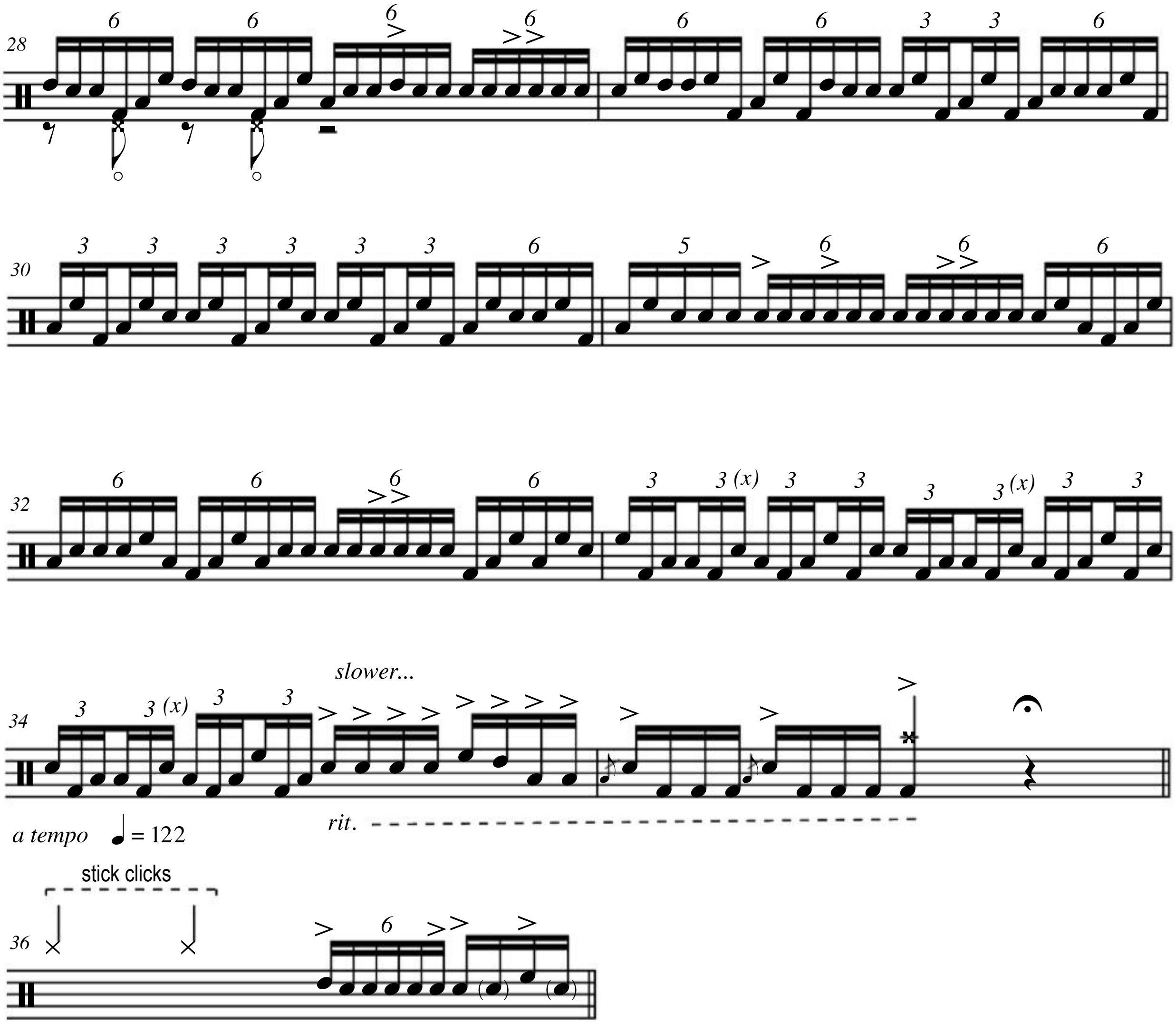


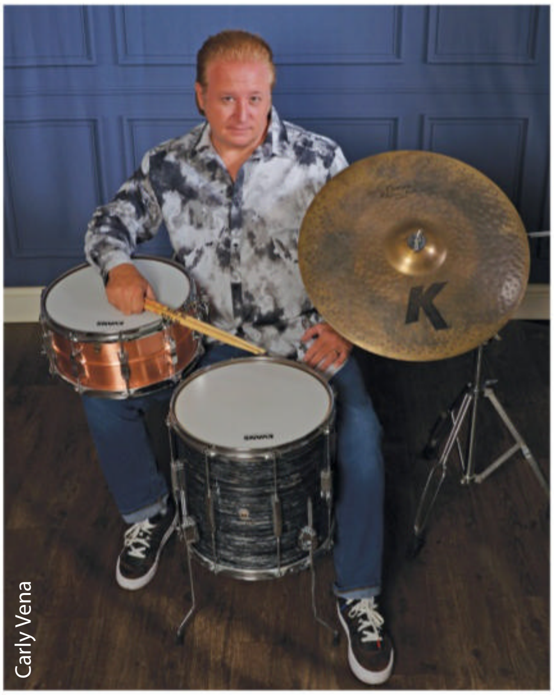

3
6
6
3
3
6
3
3
6
3
3
3
3

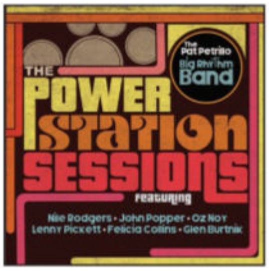
a tempo ♩ = 122




R L R R L R L R R L R L R R L R L R R L R L R R L R L R R L R L
R R L R L R R L R L R R L R L


28
30
32
34
slower...
rit.
a tempo = 122
36
stick clicks
(x)


Carly Vena


The Pat Petrillo Big Rhythm Band
THE POWER STATION SESSIONS
featuring
Nile Rodgers • John Popper • Oz Noy
Lenny Pickett • Felicia Collins • Glen Burtnik

Check out Pat's *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

Exercises for the Development of Control and Technique

By, Joe Morello

This month we continue to feature the wonderful exercises from Joe Morello's book *Master Studies*. While some teachers talk about speed and chops, Joe Morello focused on control and technique. Proper technique and controlling your hands, movements, and the sticks will eventually lead to "speed and chops," but there are no short cuts. The section of his book simply called **Control Studies** is a priceless study to achieve these (and other) goals. This month we will include his chapter on **dynamics**. Enjoy!

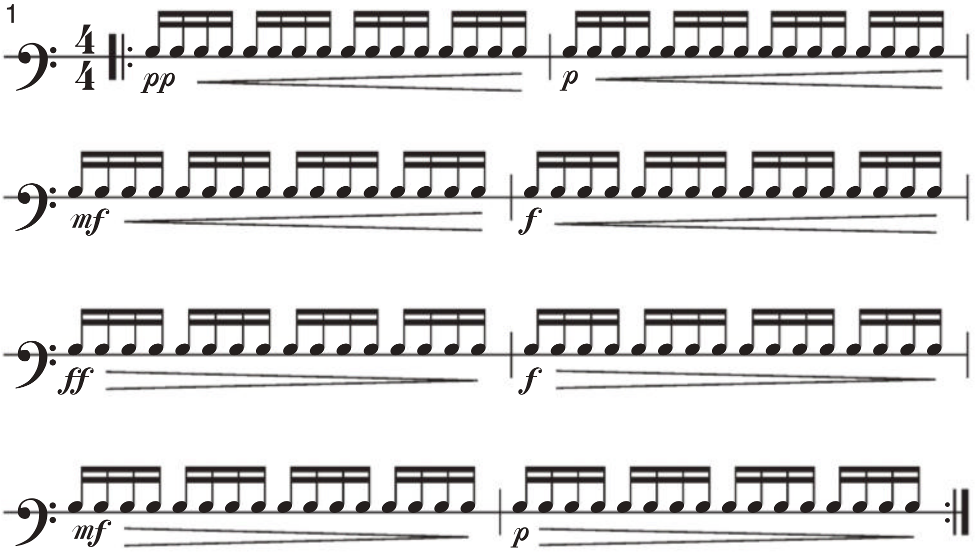
Dynamics

These exercises are good for dynamic control, and they are also tremendous endurance builders. Within the crescendos and diminuendos, there should be no sudden changes in volume. They should be done smoothly so that with the crescendos, each note is louder than the one before, and with diminuendos, each note is softer than the one before. Take these slowly enough that you can control them.

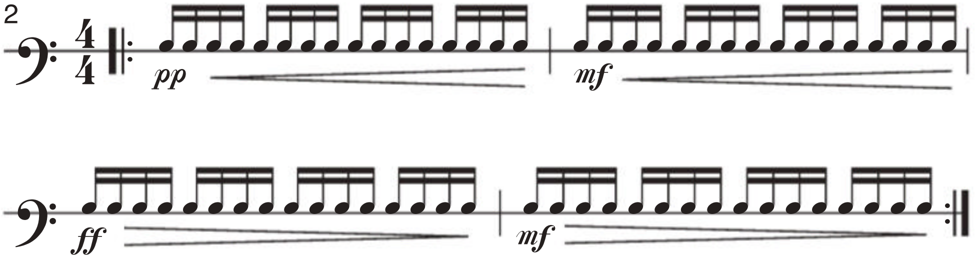
Each exercise is written with a suggested dynamic range, but don't stop there. After mastering the range that is written go back and apply a variety of dynamic ranges to the same exercises. For example, exercises one through four are written with a range from *p* to *f*. After practicing with that range try the following suggestions: *ppp* to *fff*, *pp* to *mf*, *mp* to *f*, *p* to *f*, and so on. The more ways you play these exercises, the more they will help you, and the more control you will gain.

Master Studies
by Joe Morello
Exercises For The Development Of Control And Technique
MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.

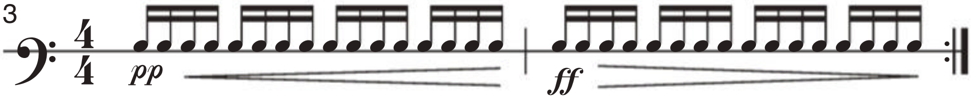
1



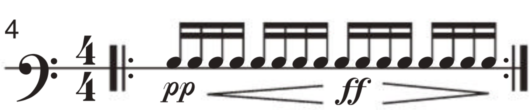
2



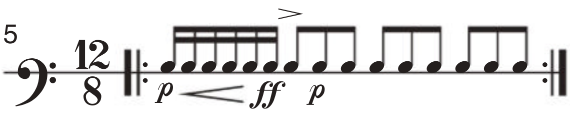
3



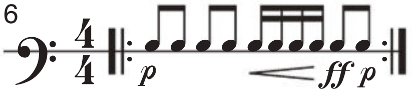
4



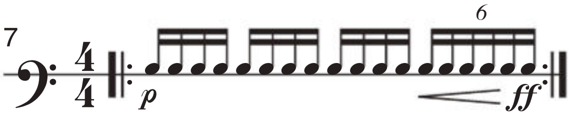
5



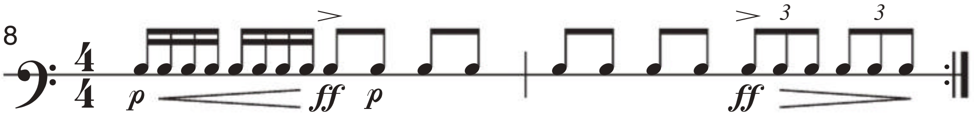
6



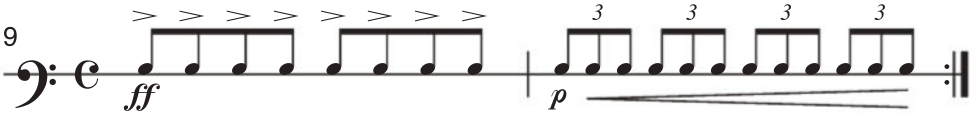
7



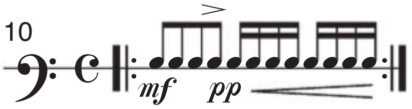
8


4/4
3 3
p
ff p
ff

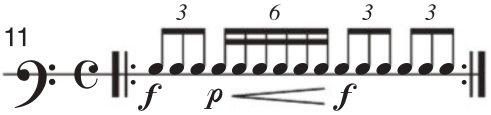
9



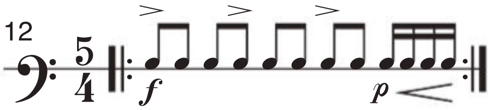
10



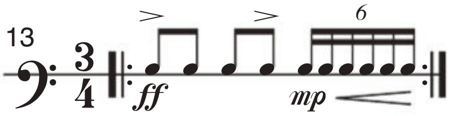
11



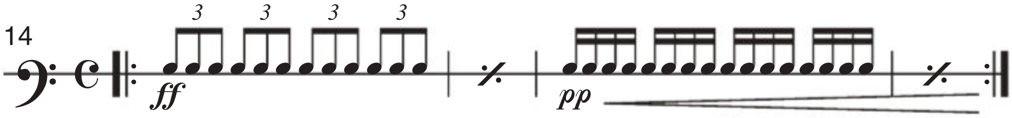
12



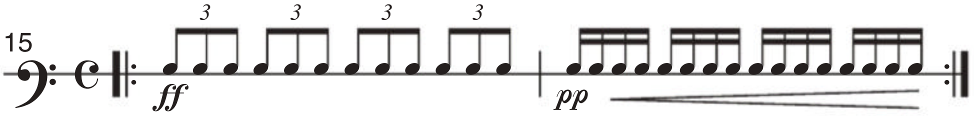
13



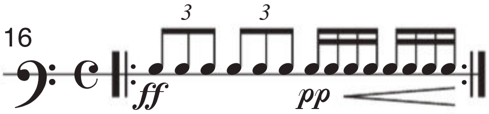
14



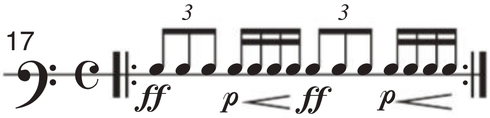
15



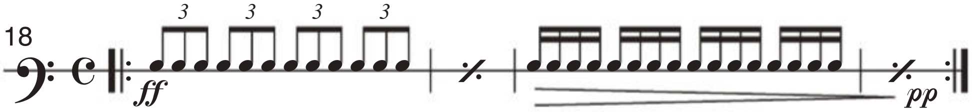
16



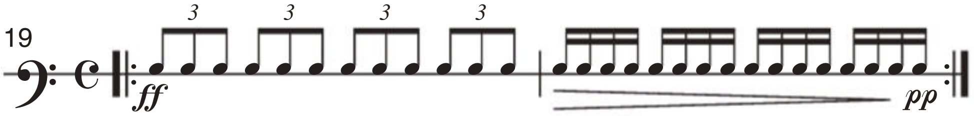
17



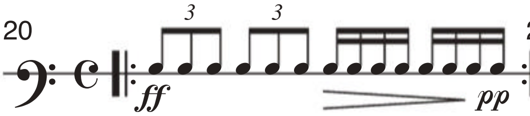
18



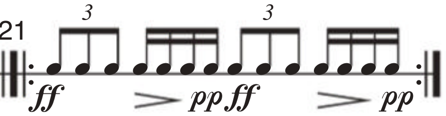
19



20



21

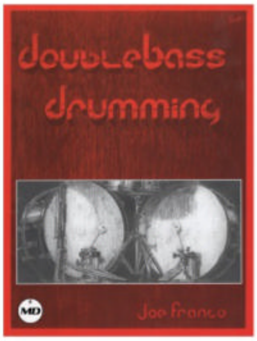

3 3
ff pp ff pp

Check out Joe's *Modern Drummer* profile page and get your copy of *Master Studies* at moderndrummer.com

Double Bass Drumming

Accented Rolls and Accented Patterns with Triplets

By Joe Franco



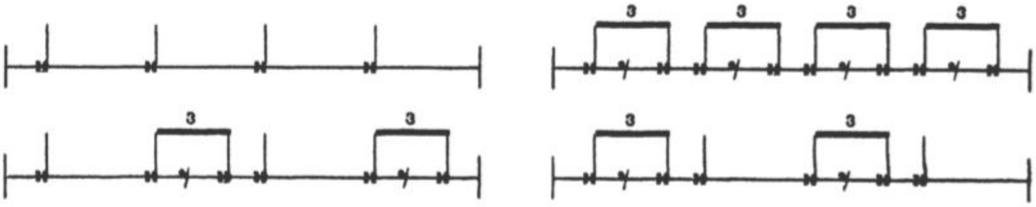
As we continue to include sections from Joe Franco's book *Double Bass Drumming*, this month Joe teaches us about playing accented rolls and accent patterns over a double bass drum roll that uses his Single Stroke System. This is a fantastic way to expand your double bass vocabulary, and is a very powerful sound.

Accented Rolls and Accented Patterns with Triplets

In these exercises, an accented single stroke roll (appearing on the left column of each exercise) and the accent (or a syncopated) pattern of that roll (appearing on the right column) of each exercise are played over the double bass roll. Accented roles and accented patterns can be interpreted in many ways. Here are a few suggestions for playing this section:

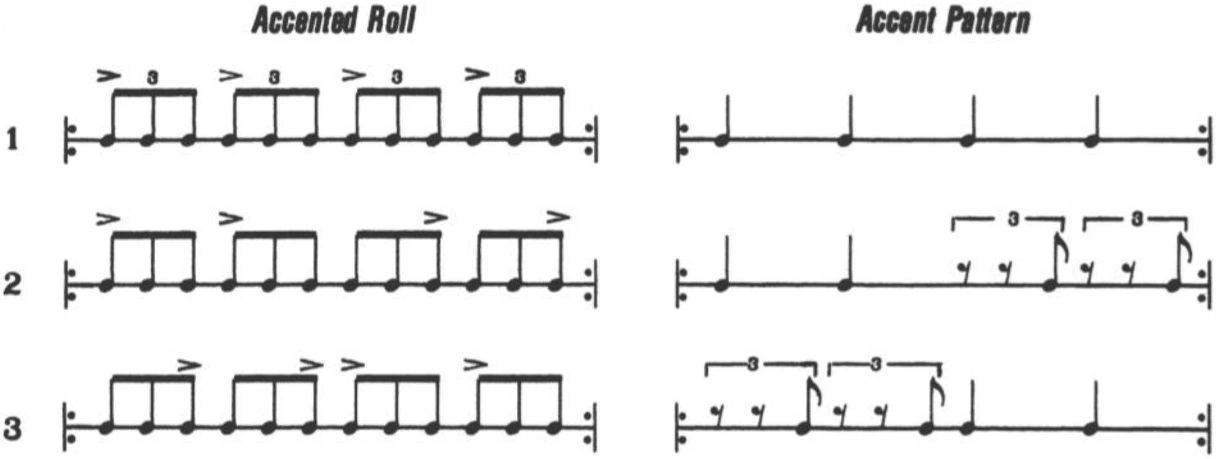
-Play the accented roll on the snare using rimshots for all accents.
-Play the accented roll on anyone drum by playing the accents loud and the unaccented (ghost notes) soft.
-Play all the accents on Toms and other parts of the kit while playing the unaccented notes on the snare.
-After playing the accented rolls, play only the accent pattern right column of each page. Break up the patterns between both hands. Try using the single stroke system for sticking or experiment with other sticking methods. Keep in mind that playing the accent pattern over the double bass roll is not as easy as playing the continuous accented roll. This will serve as a good balance and control exercise.
-Play the accent patterns with both hands simultaneously. To further develop your hand independence over the double bass roll, try playing the Accent patterns on the snare with one hand, while playing one of the following ride patterns with the other.

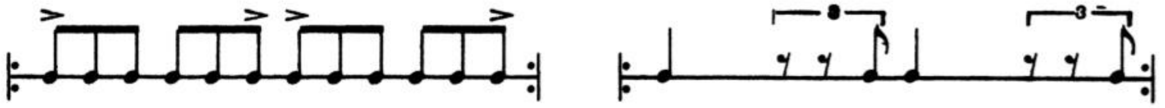
Ride Patterns Over Eighth Note Triplet Double Bass Roll

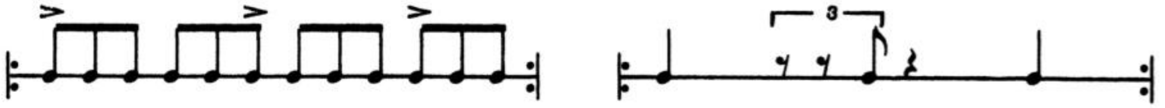


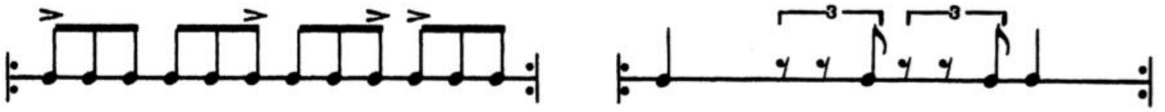
Note the double bass roll is written only once on each page at the bottom. However every hand pattern should be played over the double bass roll

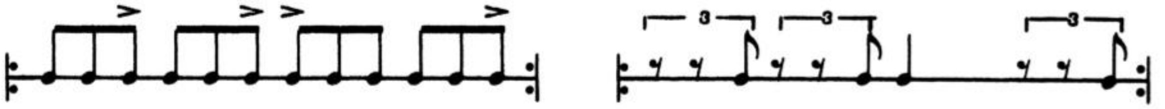
Accented Triplets

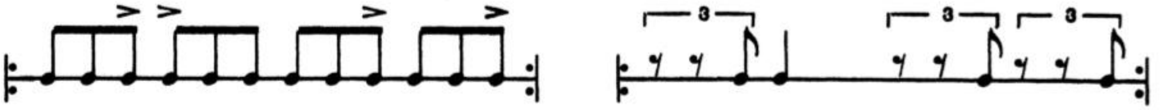


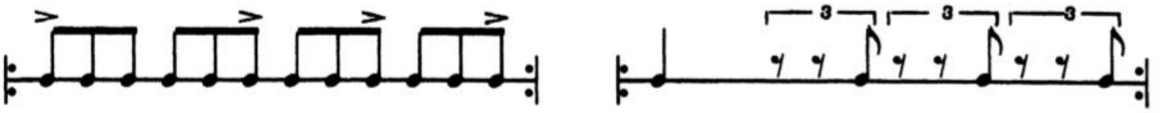
4 

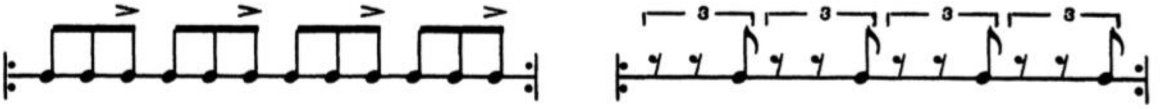
5 

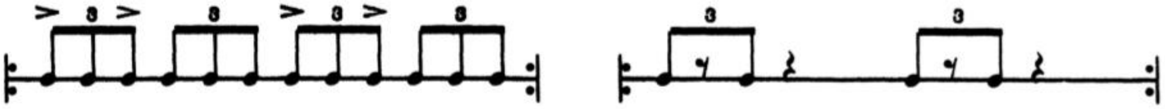
6 

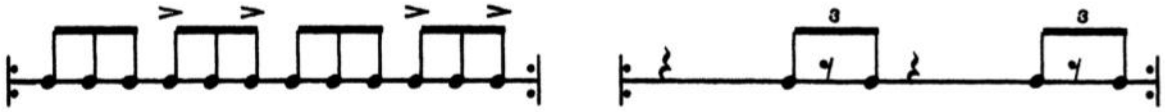
7 

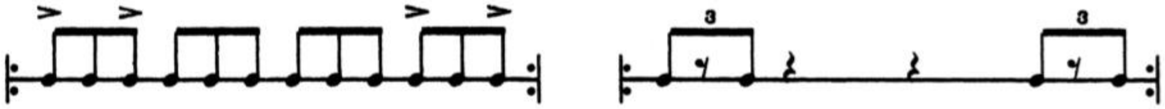
8 

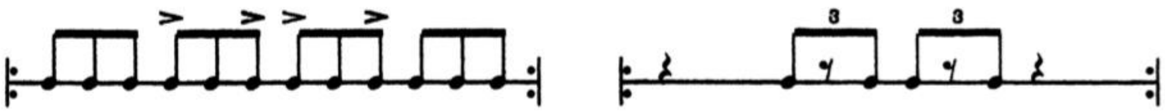
9 

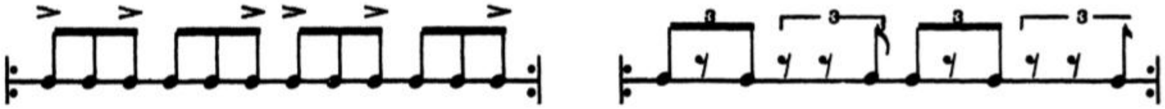
10 

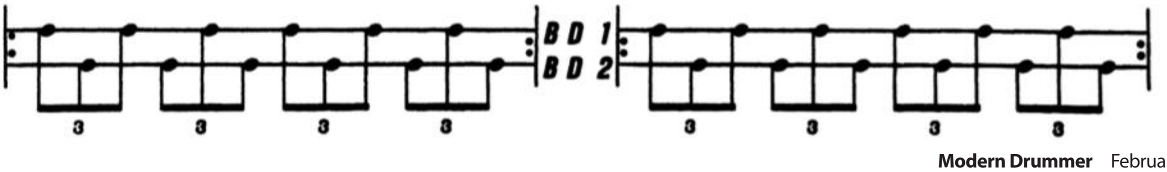
11 

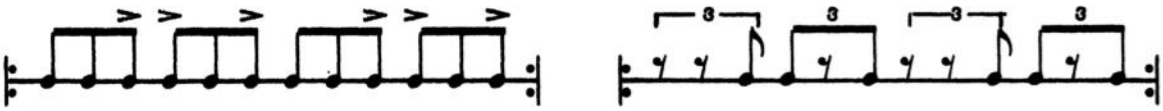
12 

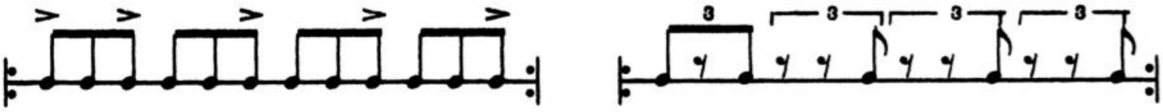
13 

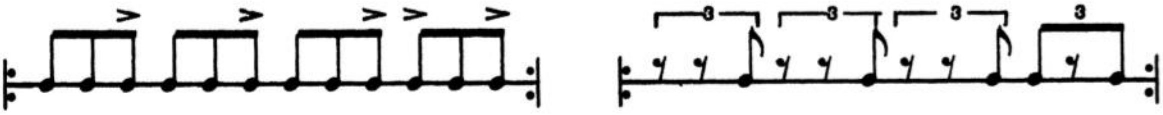
14 

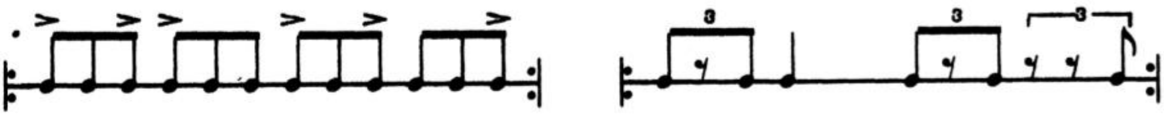
15 

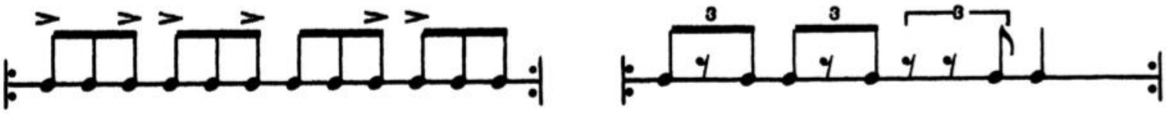


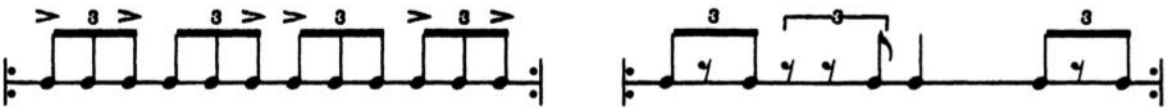
16


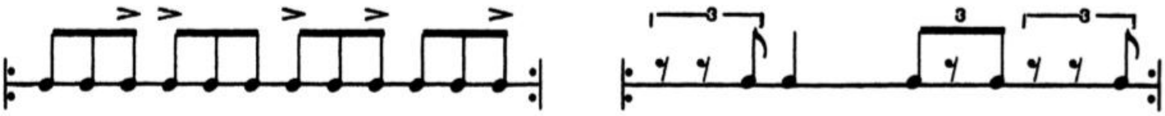
17


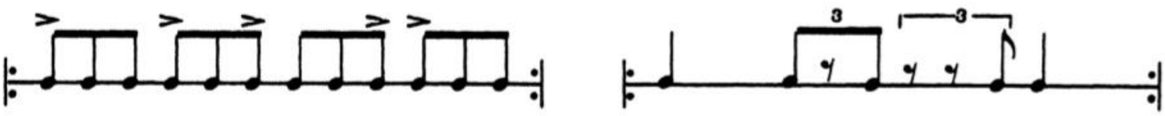
18


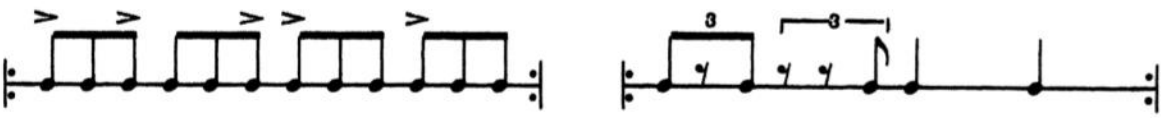
19


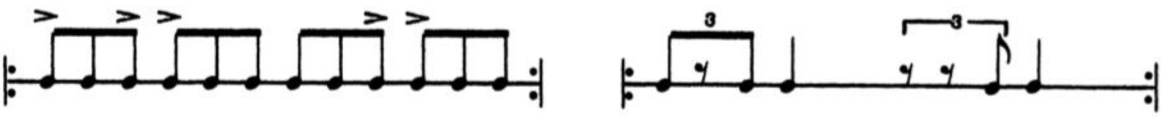
20


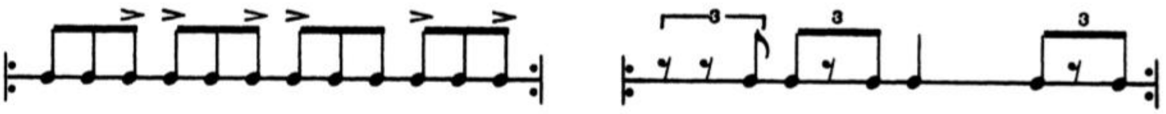
21


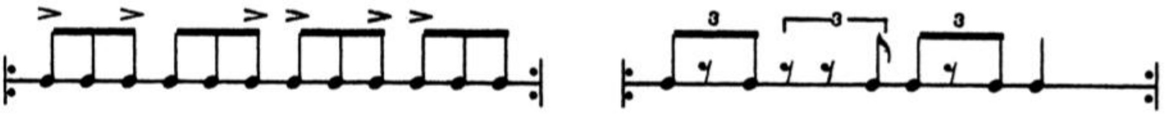
22


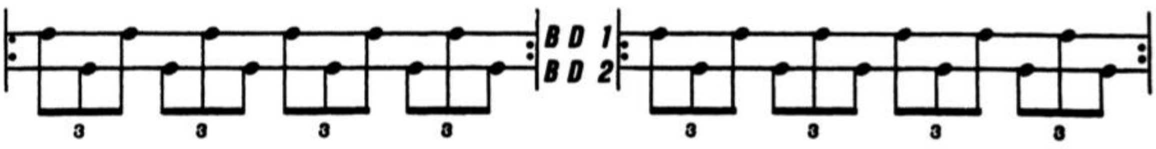
23


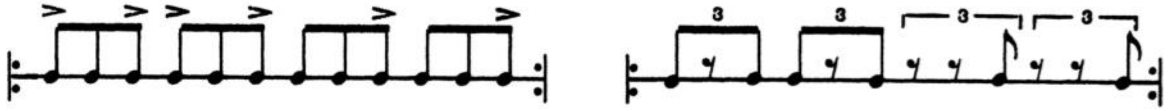
24


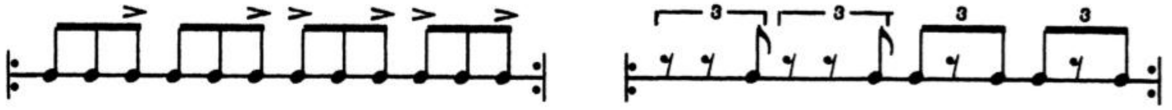
25


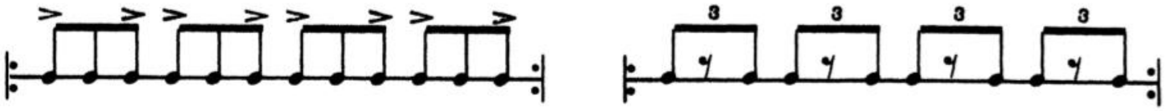
26


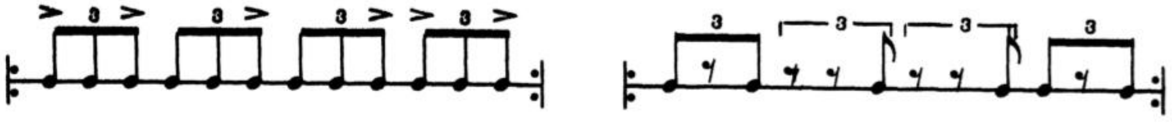
27


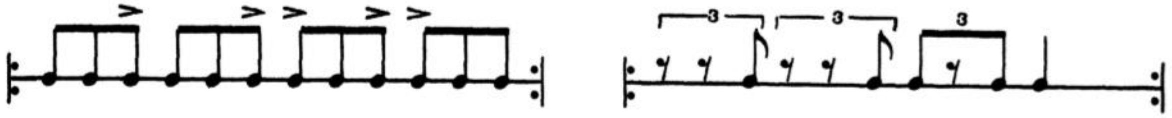


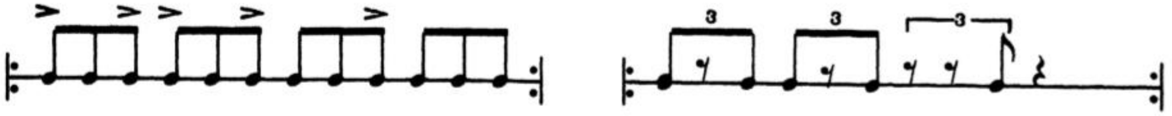
28


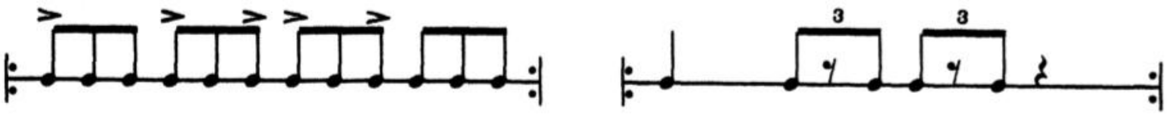
29


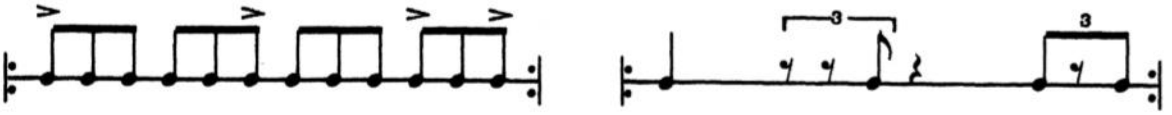
30


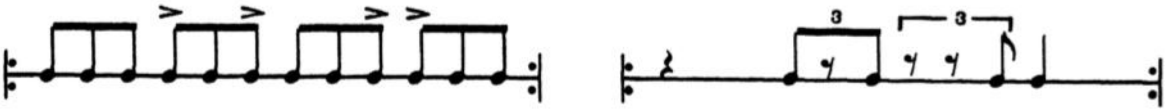
31


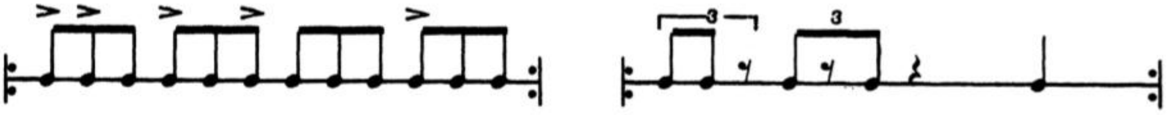
32


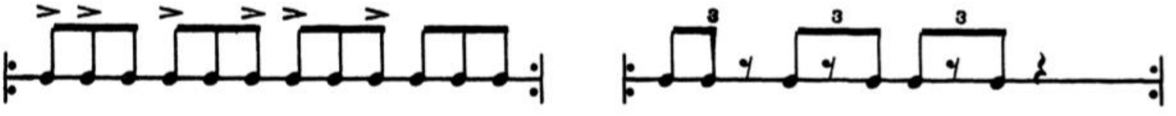
33


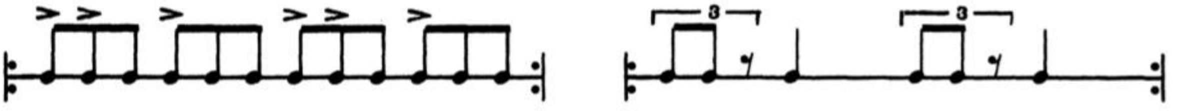
34


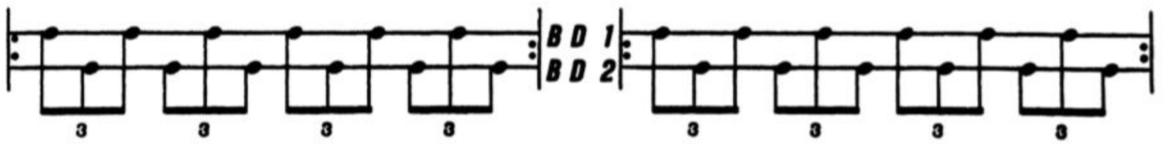
35


36


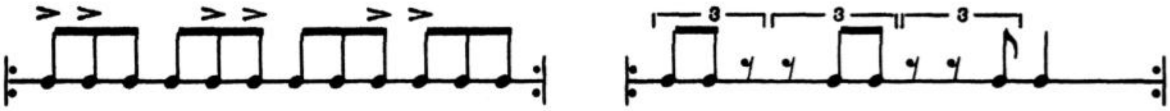
37


38


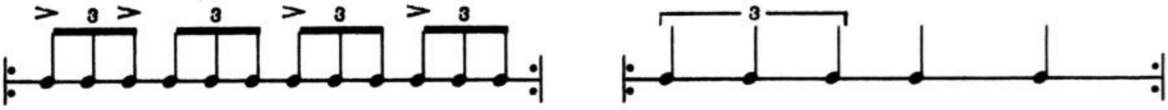
39




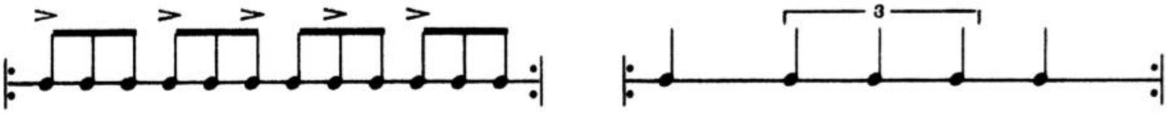
40



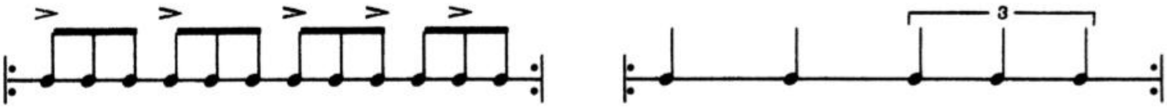
41



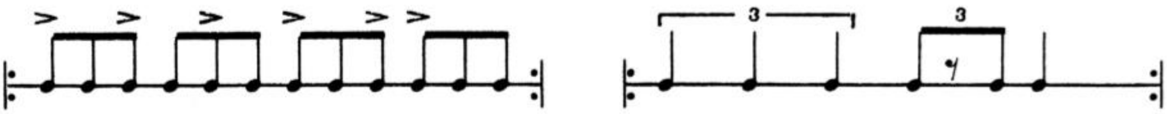
42



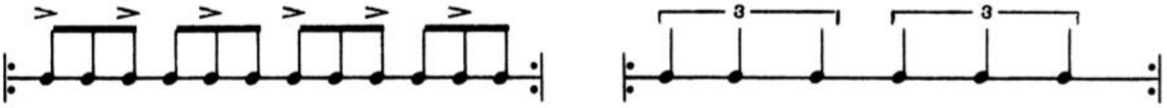
43



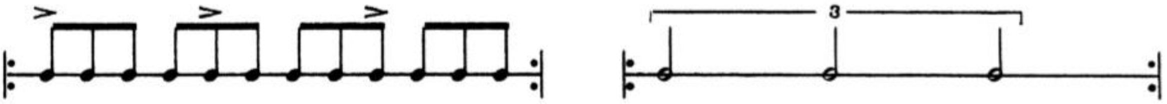
44



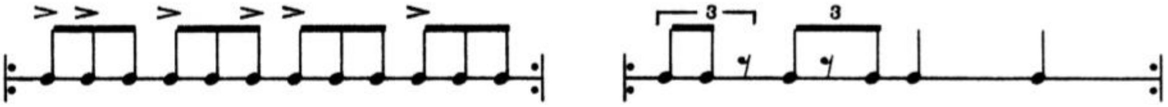
45



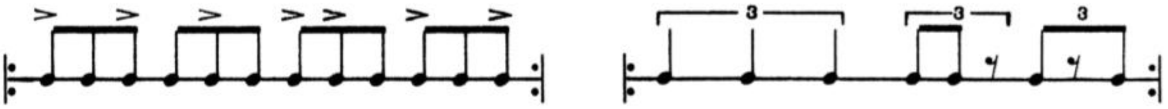
46



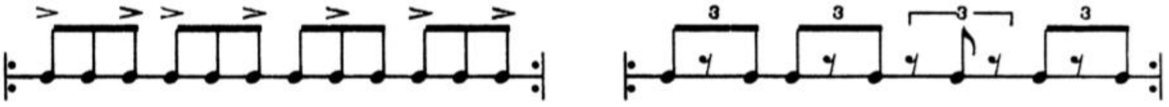
47



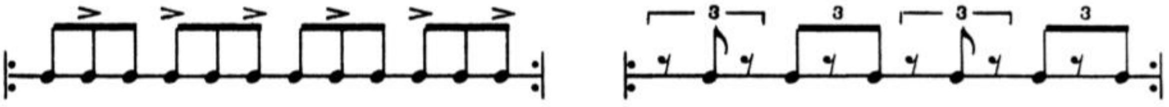
48

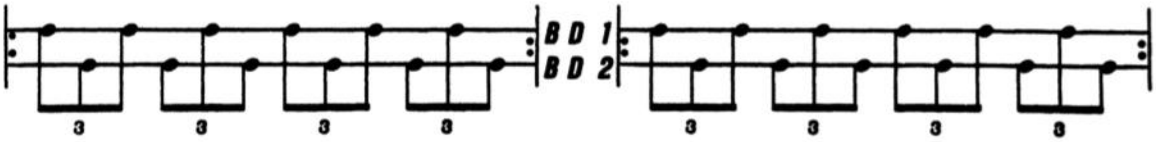


49



50





Check out Joe's *Modern Drummer* profile page and get your copy of *Double Bass Drumming* at moderndrummer.com

MODERN DRUMMER Media Presents:

Lessons From The Greats

Bass Drum Technique Books

The Encyclopedia of
DOUBLE BASS DRUMMING
REVISED EDITION
By Bobby Rondinelli and Michael Lauren
The Bass Drum Owners Manual
Applying the Moeller Technique to the Bass Drum
DIGITAL DVD DOWNLOAD INCLUDED
Building Bass Drum Technique
Strength, Speed, Endurance, And Control For Single Bass Drum Players
by Ron Spagnardi
doublebass drumming
Joe Franco
MD
REALISTIC
DOUBLE FEET
SOLOS & STUDIES... To Get Your Feet Together
• Bass Drum & Hi-Hat • Bass Drum 1 & 2
18" x 12" POSTER INCLUDED
by CARMINE APPICE
MD

Available In Print and Digital

BUY FROM YOUR FAVORITE MUSIC RETAILER

CHECK OUT MORE AT MODERNDRUMMER.COM

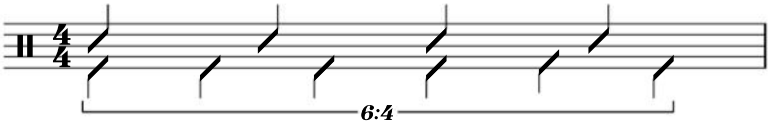
Six- Against-Four Polyrhythm

Exercises in African-American Funk

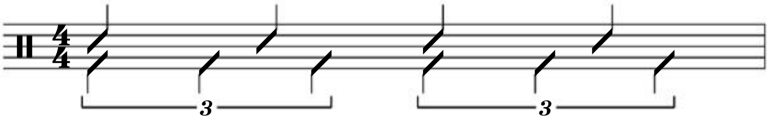
By Jonathan Joseph and Steve Rucker

This month we continue with our excerpts from Jonathan Joseph's book *Exercises in African-American Funk: Mangambe, Biktusi, and the Shuffle.* We began with last month's exploration of the three-against-four polyrhythm, the next step in our exploration of African polyrhythms is to learn to hear and play six-against-four. This polyrhythm is very prevalent in West African music, and there's a direct relationship between it and "the long three" that we discussed last month.

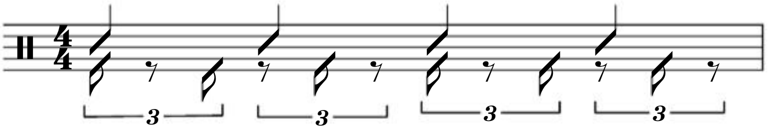
This is the basic six-against-four polyrhythm. The upper rhythm consists of quarter notes in 4/4 meter, and the lower rhythm is quarters in 6/4.



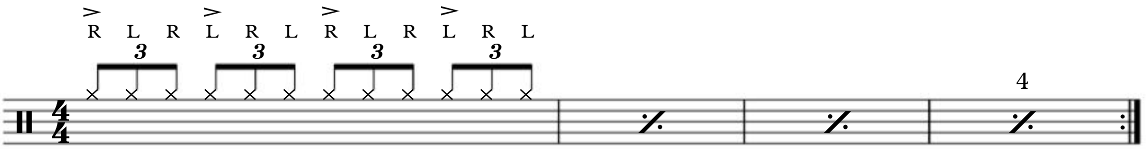
This is the same rhythm written a different way. Here, the lower rhythm is written as quarter note triplets.



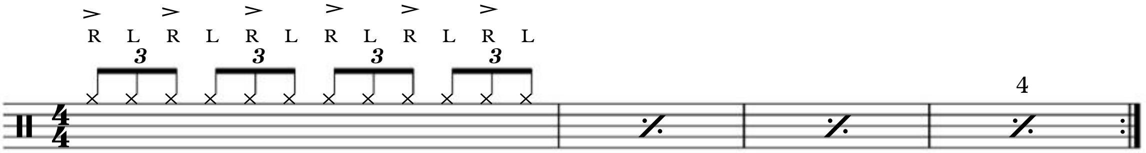
Still another way of notating this polyrhythm is to write the lower rhythm as eighth note triplets with every other note being played.



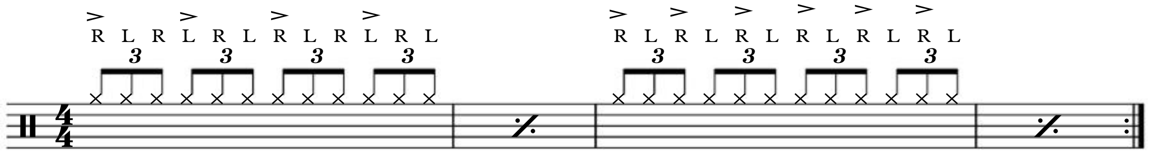
Now we'll apply the method that we used for hearing the long three from last month. Play the following triplet exercise on the hi hat. Use a metronome to keep the tempo steady, and count out loud 1, 2, 3, 4.



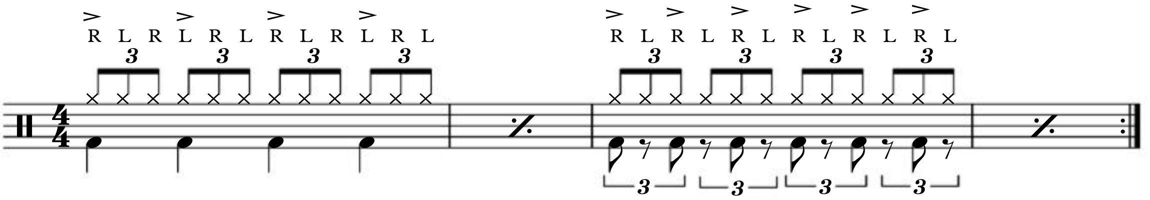
Now change the accents so that you're playing every other triplet partial. Count out 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. You don't have to play this exercise on a drum set and some of you may find the rhythm easier to hear than the "long three" exercises that we discussed last month.



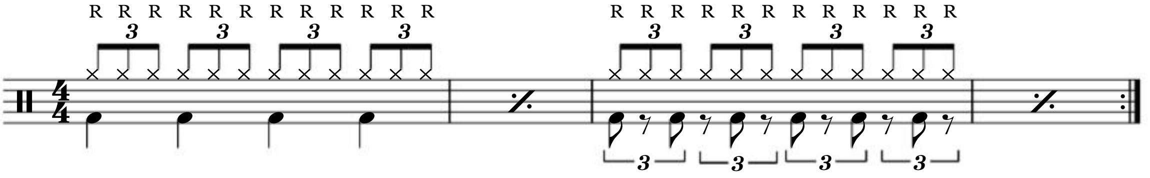
Next, alternate between two measures of 4/4 and Two measures of six against four. As you're playing this exercise, keep the tempo steady and count out loud 1, 2, 3, 4 with the accents in bars one and two, and 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 with the accents in bars three and four. Again, to make the exercise more interesting and fun, play it along with some recordings that have a triplet subdivision.


R L R L R L R L R L R L
R L R L R L R L R L R L

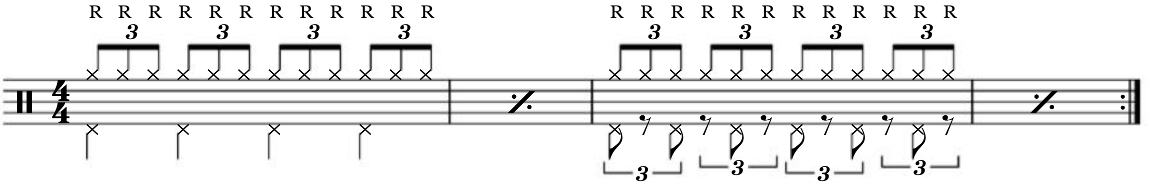
Now play the bass drum on the accented notes.


R L R L R L R L R L R L
R L R L R L R L R L R L

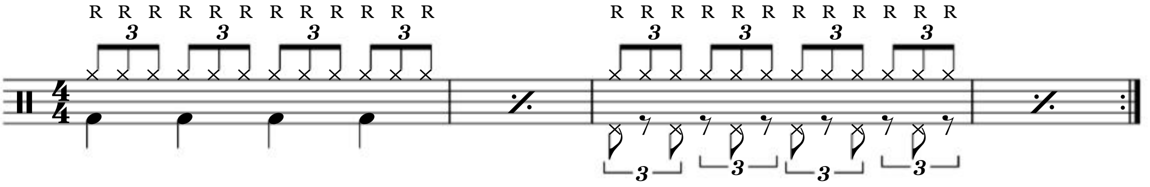
Now play the same exercise with triplets on the ride cymbal.


R R R R R R R R R R R R
R R R R R R R R R R R R

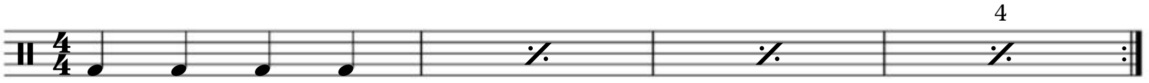
Here's the same exercise played with the hi hat foot.


R R R R R R R R R R R R
R R R R R R R R R R R R

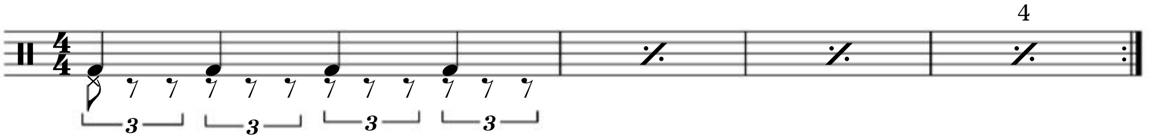
In the next exercise, play quarter notes with the bass drum for two measures, and then play six against four with the high hat foot for two measures.


R R R R R R R R R R R R
R R R R R R R R R R R R

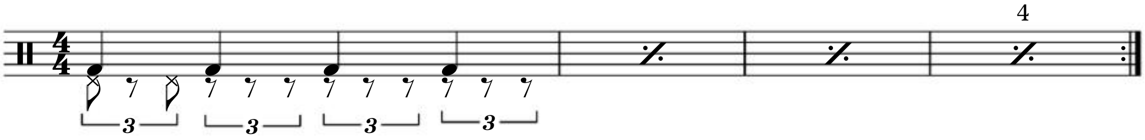
The next step is to play quarter notes and six against four at the same time. Start by playing quarter notes with the bass drum.

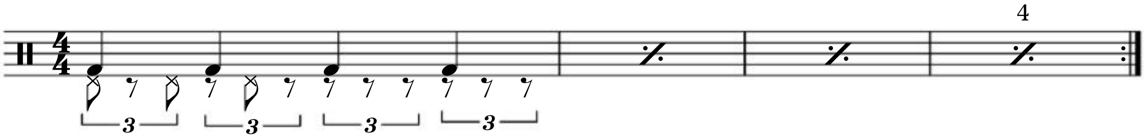


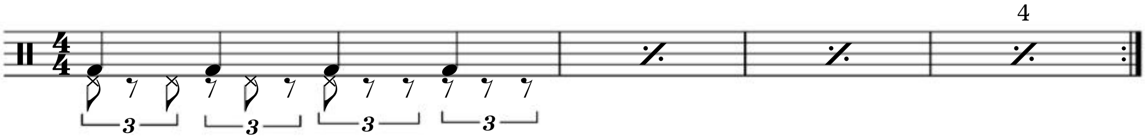
Now add the hi hat foot on beat one, while singing eighth note triplets.

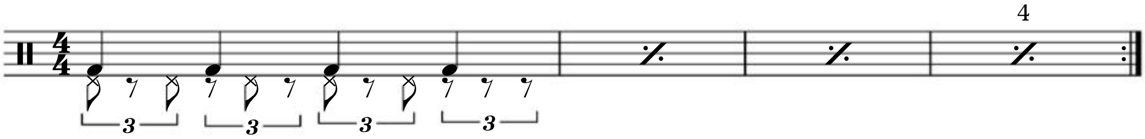


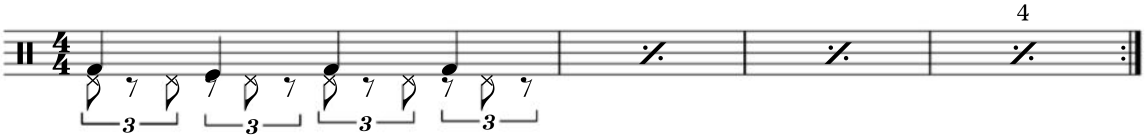
Next, add the hi hat notes one at a time until the six against four polyrhythm is complete.



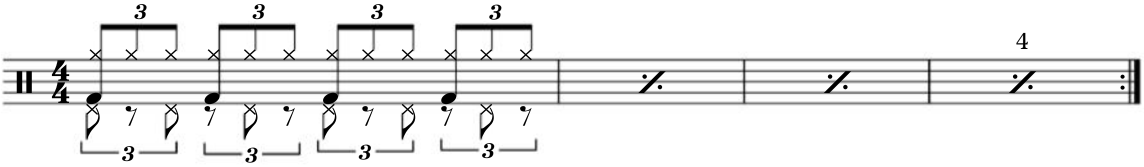




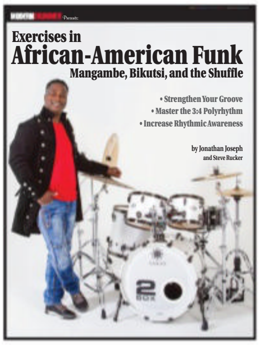




Now add triplets on the ride cymbal.



From here, feel free to experiment with cymbal variations, and, if you wish, add the snare drum on beats two and four of the bar or on beat three. We will explore many more drumset grooves using this six against four polyrhythm in upcoming months.


Exercises in
African-American Funk
Mangambe, Bikutsi, and the Shuffle
• Strengthen Your Groove
• Master the 3:4 Polyrhythm
• Increase Rhythmic Awareness
by Jonathan Joseph
and Steve Rucker

Check out Jonathan's *Modern Drummer* profile page and get your copy of *Exercises in African-American Funk* at moderndrummer.com

Pat Petrillo Groove Breakdowns

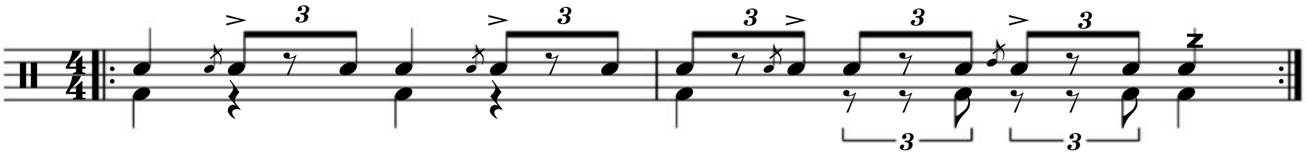
By Pat Petrillo

Pat Petrillo breaks down some important Roots Grooves that every drummer drummer know.

EARL PALMER GROOVE:

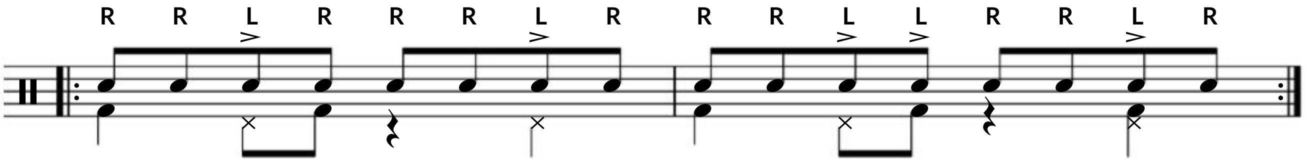
The great Earl Palmer is one of my favorite drummers. He influenced an entire generation of drummers from Ringo all the way up to today. Earl's most important grooves are the ones that he did with great artists like Fats Domino on "I'm Walkin;" or Little Richard on "Slippin' and Slidin."

This is one of my favorite Earl Palmer grooves. Earl grew up playing second-line march music which is more of a two-beat feel.



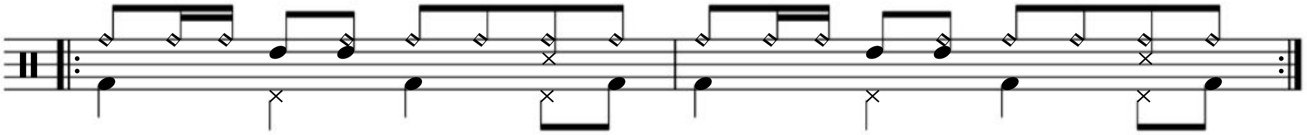
If you use this as your foundation, you will create the feeling of a slightly swung second-line march. That will help you hear where Earl is coming from. This whole beat is on the snare. I'm not sure what sticking he used. He's playing most of the swing notes with his right hand and the backbeats on 2 and 4 with what is called a Charleston bass drum rhythm.

This rhythmic feeling is what we call "in the cracks." It's not quite straight and not quite all the way swung. It's somewhere in the middle.



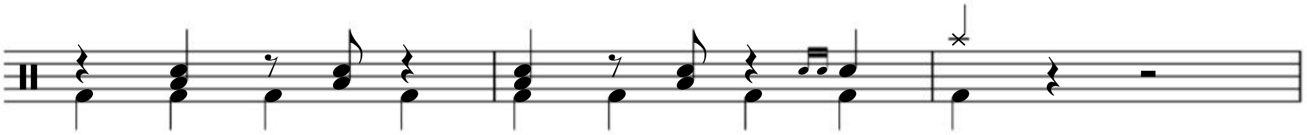
RINGO GROOVE BREAKDOWN:

This is one of my favorite Ringo grooves of all time. It's from the song, "I Feel Fine," which is on the *Beatles '65* album. It really highlights the faux-mambo beat that Ringo used on a lot of tunes, and it shows what Ringo's versatility was all about.



Of course, we know that Ringo is left-handed. However, he played the Mambo rhythm on the bell of the ride with his right hand, which shows his dexterity. Ringo didn't play the hi-hat with his left foot on this groove, but that's something that you could do on 2 and 4. Obviously, Ringo listened to a lot of American records growing up as a youngster and as a drummer.

Here is the famous fill from the middle of the guitar break of the same song.



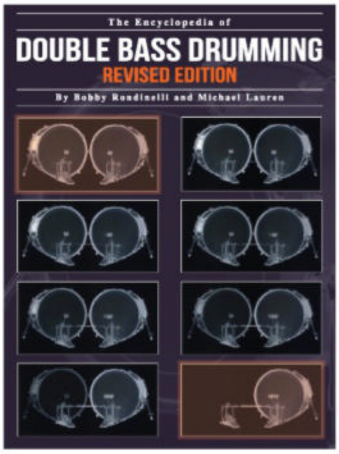
Check out Pat's *Modern Drummer* profile page at moderndrummer.com

The Encyclopedia of Double Bass Drumming

Two Consecutive 16th Notes

By Bobby Rondinelli and Michael Lauren

Bobby Rondinelli and Michael Lauren wrote *The Encyclopedia of Double Bass Drumming*. It takes a slightly different approach from our ongoing studies from the Joe Franco book on double bass drumming. Last month we began with some basics. This month's excerpt develops your ability to create warm-ups, beats, and fills by playing two consecutive notes with your bass drums.



This chapter includes warm-ups, beats, and fills containing two consecutive 16th notes.

Although these two note ideas can be played with one foot, the ability to play two notes evenly and powerfully between your feet must be developed.

The warm-up exercises help develop your coordination by focusing solely on repeated two note patterns.

Make your feet sound consistent on their own.

Beats 13 to 18 are more difficult. Feel free to come back to them at a later date.

Beats 16 to 18 have syncopated snare drum rhythms.

Beats 19 to 20 are two bar phrases. Combine any of the previous beats to create your own two, four, and eight bar phrases.

Fills 21 to 30 are one measure fills. Combine them with the previous beats.

The fills are written with snare drum and bass drums only. Try other orchestrations. For example:

1. Right hand on snare drum and left hand on high tom.
2. Right hand on floor tom and left hand on high tom.

Fill 31 is an example of a two-bar phrase containing a short fill.

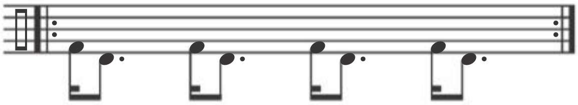
Fills 32 and 33 are examples of phrases that include a one bar fill.

Fill 34 illustrates a fill that is longer than one measure.

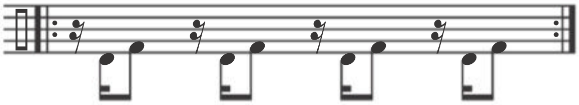
Be creative with the length of your fills. They don't have to start and end on beat one of a measure.

Warm-Ups

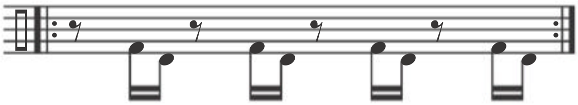
1



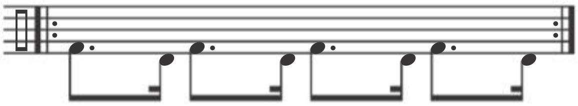
2



3

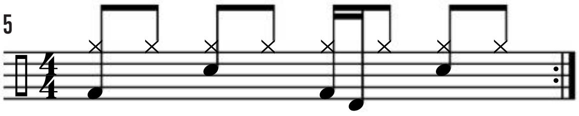


4

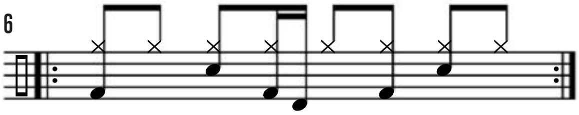


Beats

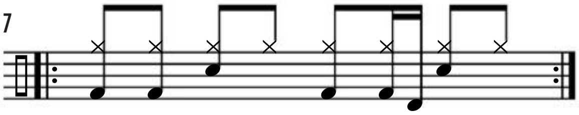
5



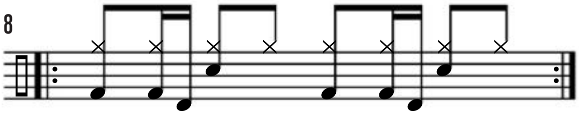
6



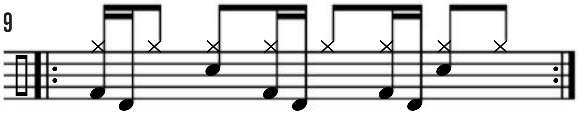
7



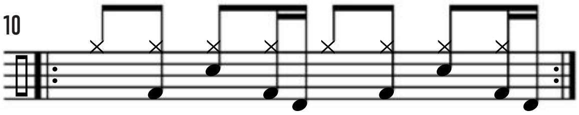
8



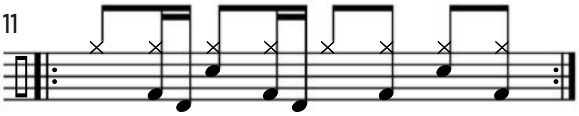
9



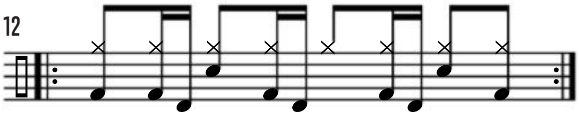
10



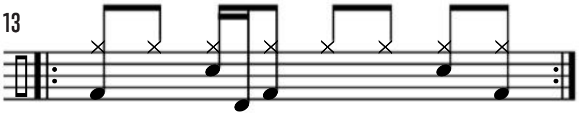
11



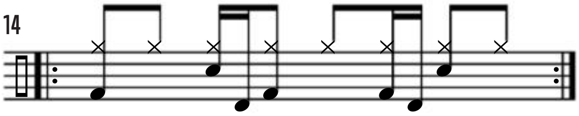
12



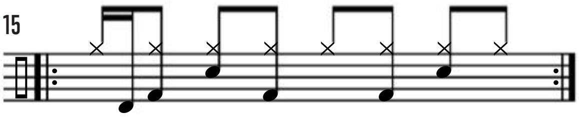
13



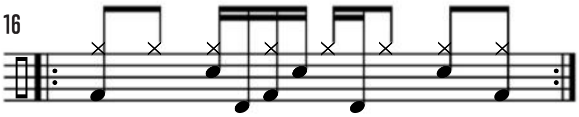
14



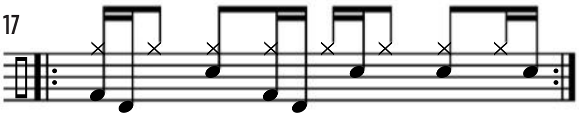
15



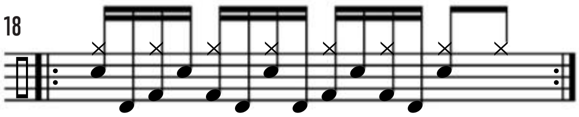
16



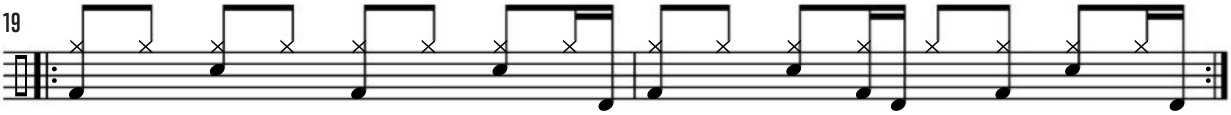
17



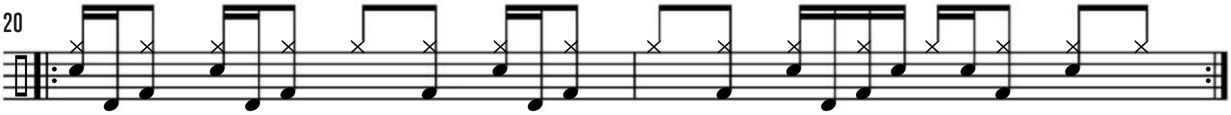
18



19

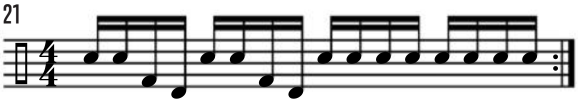


20

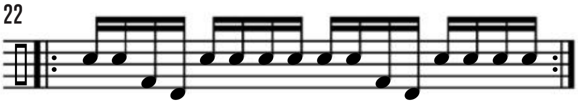


Fills

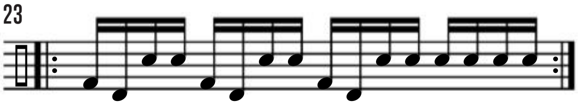
21



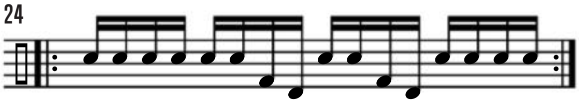
22



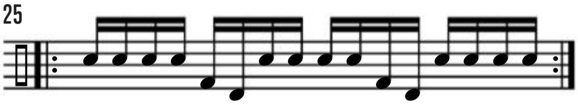
23



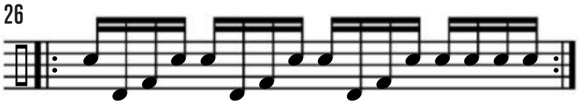
24



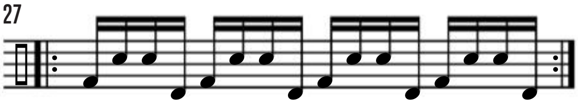
25



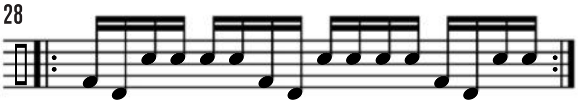
26



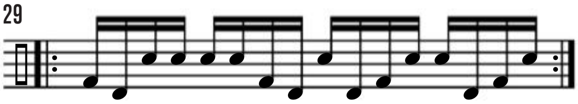
27



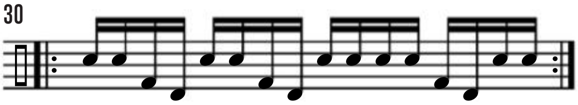
28



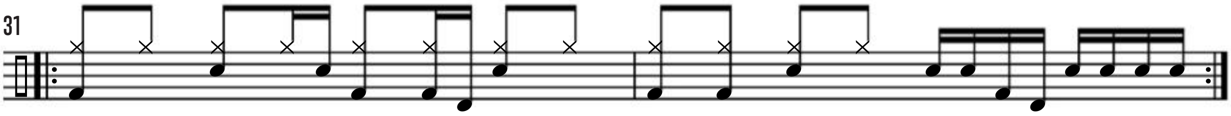
29



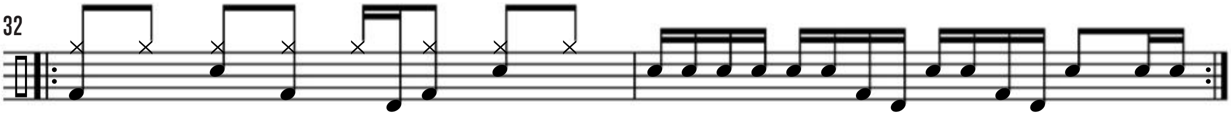
30



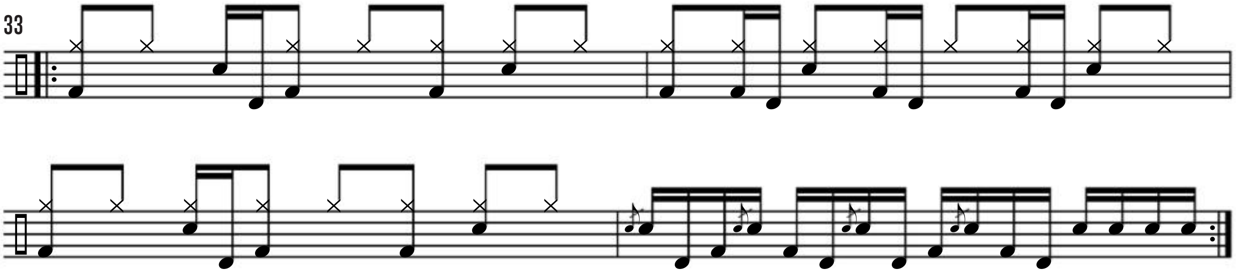
31



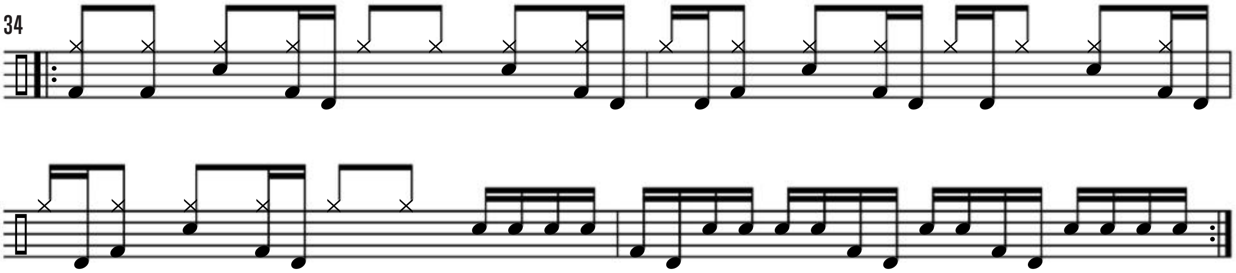
32



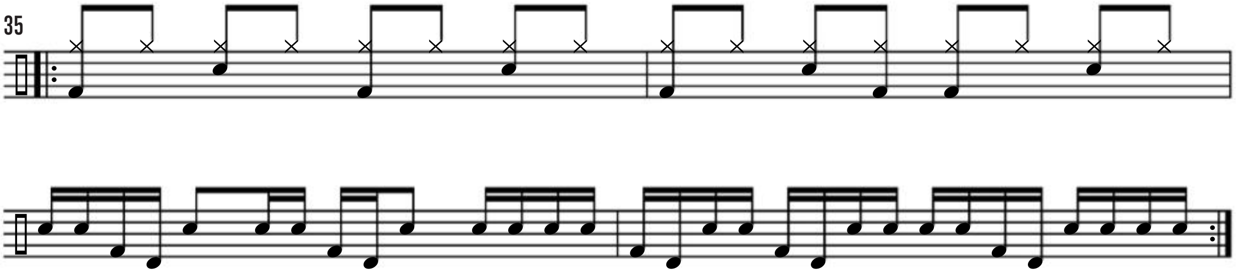
33



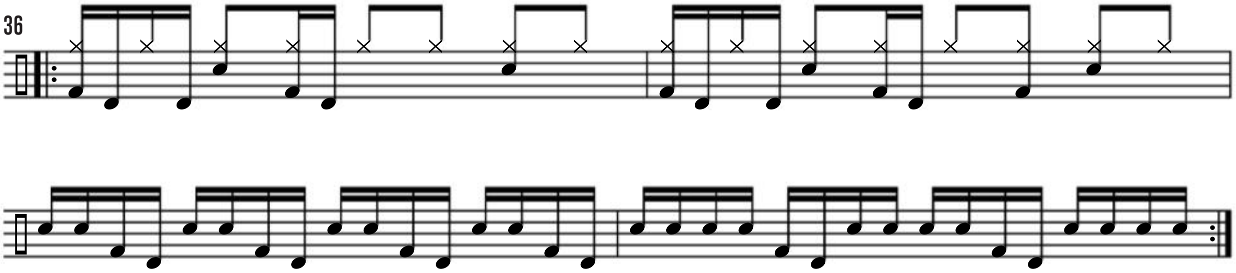
34



35



36



Check out Bobby and Michael's *Modern Drummer* profile pages and get your copy of *The Encyclopedia of Double Bass Drumming* at moderndrummer.com

Understanding the Language of Music

A Drummer's Guide to Theory and Harmony

By Ron Spagnardi

Modern Drummer founder Ron Spagnardi wrote an excellent book called *Understanding the Language of Music, a Drummer's Guide to Theory and Harmony.* This book spells out the basics of theory and harmony in a very organized and easy to understand way. It is an excellent book for drummers looking to learn about the language of music beyond drumming, and further their musicianship. This month we will start to reprint the parts of Ron's book here in *Modern Drummer* for everyone to read and learn. Here is how Ron introduced his book and subject (with a couple of my small additions.)

Have you ever noticed how many of the world's most influential drummers have a deeper understanding of music, and some experience on another instrument? Take, for example, the piano skills of Jack DeJohnette, Gary Husband, and Philly Joe Jones. Then there's Elvin Jones, Jim Black, and Dave Grohl's guitar playing… Joe Morello's early training as a classical violinist… Louie Bellson, Tony Williams, Mike Portnoy, Dennis Mackrel, Stewart Copeland, Terri Lyne Carrington, and Gavin Harrison's composing and arranging abilities. Phil Collins, Narada Michael Walden, Don Henley, and Roger Taylor's songwriting talents… Max Roach and Cindy Blackman's understanding of theory and harmony, and Alan Dawson's skill on vibes.

Learning a secondary instrument, combined with an understanding of the language of music, will undoubtedly make you a more musical drummer. When you know more about melody, harmony, scales, and chords, you become more of a total musician. And as a total musician, you're much more valuable as a drummer in just about any situation.

There's really no need to be in the dark when your keyboard player says, let's substitute a Db 9 chord for the G7 on the fourth bar of the chorus. Or when your guitarist suggests a I, VI, II, V chord progression at the bridge. If you want to know what's going on around you and contribute to the process of making music, you need to know more than eighth notes on the hi hat and a snare drum backbeat.

There are many ways to obtain the knowledge you need. Guitar is a great instrument for understanding more about chord progressions. Learning bass can help you understand why your bass player chose a particular bass line on a tune. However, I found that a general understanding of a keyboard instrument is the fastest and easiest way to learn the basics.

Once you grasp the mechanics of a keyboard, it's like having an entire orchestra at your fingertips. Melody, theory, harmony, and chord progressions all come together right there in front of you. The keyboard offers an opportunity to visually and aurally get a handle on scales, voicings, and chord structure. You also learn why certain things work musically and others don't, in accordance with the rules of music that have been handed down. A deeper knowledge can add to your appreciation of different types of music, and have a major influence on how you relate to your bandmates from a musical perspective. And if you've ever had the desire to write or arrange, it can open the door to that as well.

In order to gain maximum benefit from the lessons that will be in this column, you'll need to access a keyboard instrument. A piano would be the obvious first choice. However, an organ, a synthesizer, or a simple 5 octave portable keyboard unit with 61 keys will suffice. It's essential to hear, see, and practice the wealth of information that will be presented here

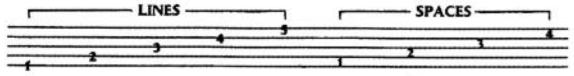
For those who feel they have little time in their schedule to learn another instrument, bear in mind that it's not our purpose to turn you into a virtuoso keyboard player. Helping you to understand the essentials of music theory via the keyboard is our only objective here.

Throughout these lessons we'll be discussing many things you may have heard of before, but never really understood. We'll be shedding light on key signatures, scales, intervals, inversions, the Roman numeral system, diatonic harmony, chord structure, progressions, voicings, alterations, extensions, and more. We'll start out with the basics and gradually proceed to a more advanced level. Sure, it's a lot to absorb. But it should be no more difficult than when you had to master the double stroke roll or develop your hand and foot coordination.

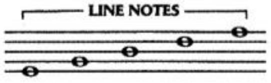
We'll begin with keyboard recognition and note names. Study and practice the columns in the coming months, and you'll be amazed at how quickly your understanding of theory and harmony will expand. Who knows? Eventually, when your keyboard player calls for that Db 9 chord on the fourth bar of the chorus, not only will you know what he's talking about, you may even be able to suggest an A minor instead!

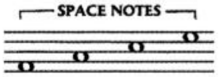
Before we can begin our study of the language of music, we need to have a good understanding of the **basics** of music notation. So here goes.

Music is notated on a **staff** made-up of five lines and four spaces.

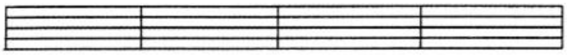

LINES
SPACES
1
2
3
4
5
1
2
3
4

Notes are placed on the five lines and within the four spaces.

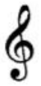



SPACE NOTES

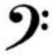
Vertical **bar lines** separate one group of notes from another on the staff.



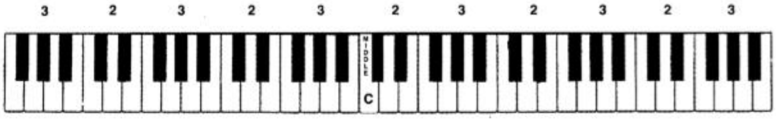
The **treble clef** sign identifies notes above middle C on the keyboard. These notes are most commonly played by the right hand.



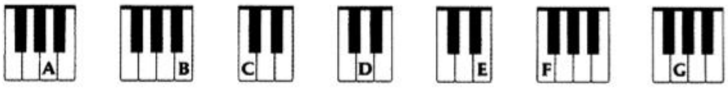
The **bass clef** sign identifies notes below middle C on the keyboard. These notes are generally played by the left hand.



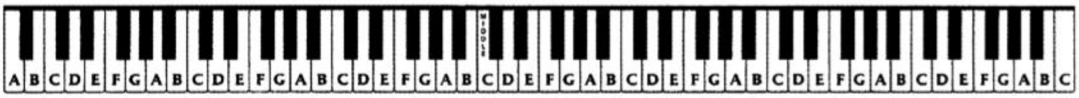
Let's get familiar with the layout of the keyboard. Look at the example below and notice the pattern of white keys spaced between a series of three and then two black keys. Note below how the pattern repeats itself along the keyboard.


3
2
3
2
3
2
3
2
3
2
3
MIDDLE
C

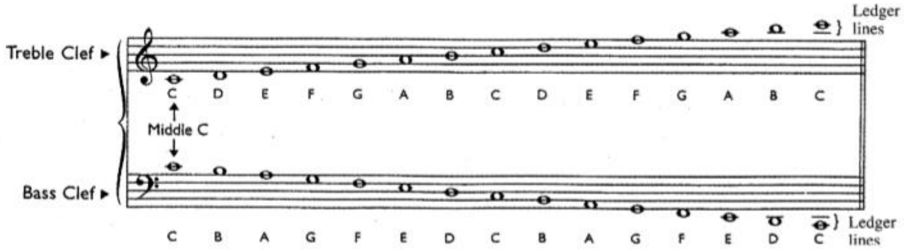
All of the keys on the keyboard are named in relation to the first seven letters of the alphabet: **A, B, C, D, E, F, G.** Every white key can be easily recognized by its position in relation to a black key group. Notice in the example that follows where the seven lettered notes appear in relation to the black keys.



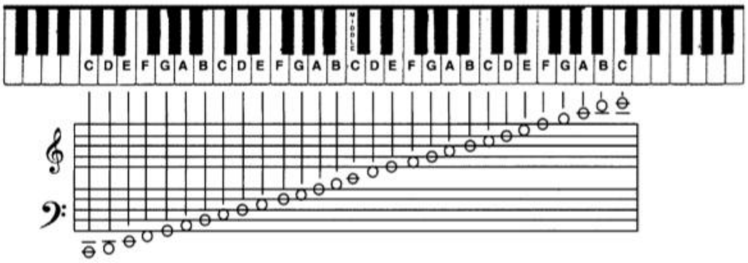
Here's an entire keyboard that includes the letter names of all the white notes. Notice the repetition up and down the keyboard. Study the layout and be able to identify all of the white notes on the keyboard.


MIDDLE
A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C

Remember the five lines and four spaces we discussed earlier? Below you'll find all of the notes placed on the treble and bass clefs. Starting with **middle C**, the right-hand treble clef notes move upward in alphabetical sequence **(C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, etc)** while the left hand bass clef notes move downward **(C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C, etc.)**


Treble Clef ▸
C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C
Ledger lines
Middle C
Bass Clef ▸
C B A G F E D C B A G F E D C
Ledger lines

Study the example below to see how the notes on the staff correspond with the keys on the keyboard.


MIDDLE
C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C

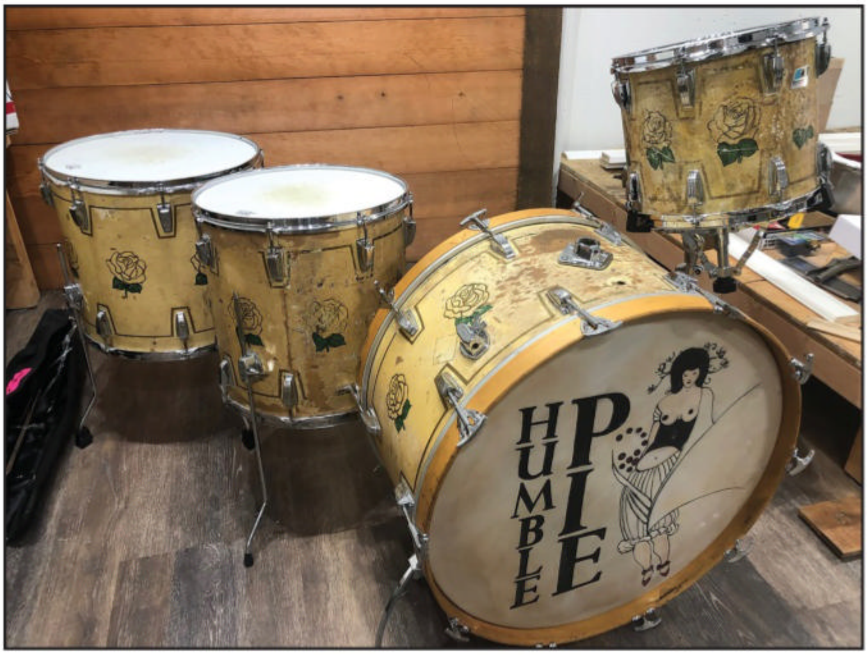
It's essential to familiarize yourself with all the notes on the treble and bass clefs and where they appear on the keyboard. Be sure to spend the time necessary to absorb all of the material above.

Understanding
The Language Of Music

Check out Ron's *Modern Drummer* profile page and get your copy of *Understanding The Language Of Music* at moderndrummer.com

Jerry Shirley's Humble Pie Ludwig Roses Set

By, Donn Bennett

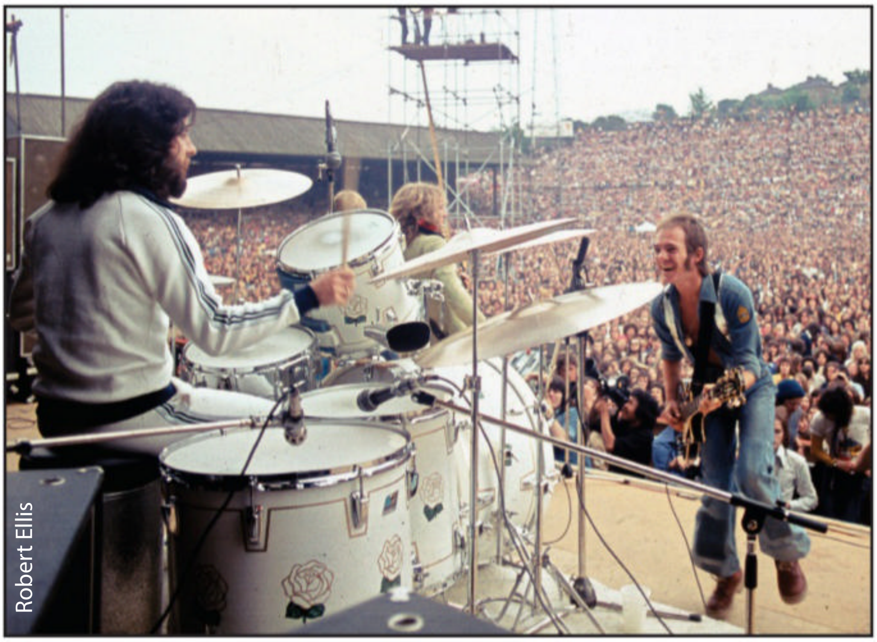


You never know what you'll find on Craigslist. What initially looked like the crappiest set of drums I've ever seen, turned out to be one of the greatest and most iconic rock and roll drum sets of our time with a long and fascinating story.

I've been dealing in used drums for a long time. I started long before eBay and Reverb, and actually long before there even was an internet. I've seen some crappy drum sets, but this one took the cake. Fundamentally it was a great set, but it had definitely seen better days. Actually, that's a dramatic understatement. This set lived the rock and roll dream!!! In it's heyday, this set was used to whip concert audiences into a rock n' roll frenzy in the world's biggest concert venues and to record some of the most classic rock songs of our time. Like a lot of rock n' roll dreams it also saw some dark times and was eventually put out to pasture as the house set in a smoky bar in Portland, OR.

The story of this set began in 1968, when a 16-year-old drummer named Jerry Shirley, passed his audition for Steve Marriott and Peter Frampton, and landed a gig in their new band. Both Marriott and Frampton were already well-established rock stars and their new band, called Humble Pie, would become known as the first ever "Super Group." By 1970, Humble Pie was touring hard and establishing themselves as a top live act, and it was time for Jerry Shirley to get himself a new drum set. His new drums needed to take the pounding that he was giving and stand out on some the world's biggest stages. Jerry also wanted the drums to be as loud as possible. He commissioned the Ludwig drum company to build him this set with a 14x26 bass drum, a 12x14 mounted tom and a pair of 16x16 and 16x18 floor toms. The shells were Ludwig's 3-ply shells with reinforcing rings and clear maple interiors. He felt that Ludwig's standard wrapped Cortex finishes inhibited a drum's resonance, so with the help of Ludwig Artist Relations manager Bill Ludwig III, they chose a custom matte white painted finish.

Jerry chose a Supraphonic 400 5x14 aluminum shelled snare that was eventually replaced with a Supraphonic 402 6.5x14 model. He completed the set with Paiste 602 cymbals and Rogers cymbal stands. He used a Ludwig Speed King bass pedal with a custom-made extended beater that allowed it to hit the 26" bass drum dead center where it produced the loudest and fattest note possible.


Robert Ellis

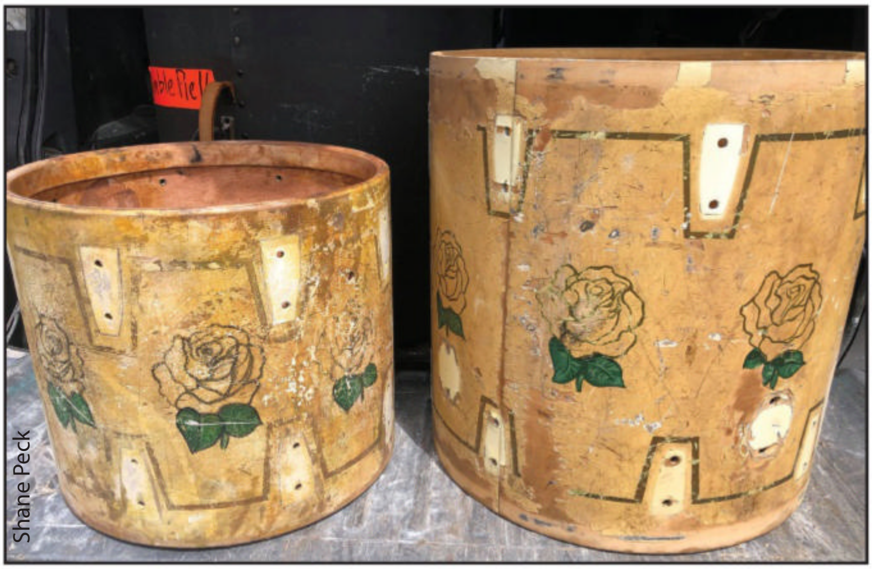
Between 1970 and 1972, Humble Pie recorded three top selling albums that included their classic hits "I Don't Need No Doctor," "Thirty Days in the Hole," and

"Hot 'n' Nasty." The band toured almost non-stop. Around 1972, and during a short break in their schedule, Jerry once again asked Bill Ludwig III for a favor. Jerry wanted his drums painted with a custom graphic design. Custom graphics were not something that Ludwig offered at the time, so Bill asked one of the ladies in his office whose husband was a sign painter to tackle the job. According to Jerry's instructions, a hand painted rose should appear on each panel of every drum. In addition, a continuous gold pinstripe should be above and below each rose. The painter charged Shirley a whopping $70 for the entire job. I'm guessing he was probably a Humble Pie fan! The "Roses Set" as it became known, can be seen in live photos of the band from 1972 until they broke up in 1975.

Jerry loved the Roses Set and kept it in immaculate condition the entire time he played with Humble Pie. After the band broke up, with bills to pay, no place to store the set, and the assumption that Humble Pie would soon be forgotten, Jerry Shirley sold the set. The buyer was Tony Machine. He was the drummer in David Johansen's fledgling alter ego band, Buster Poindexter and the Banshees of Blue. With Tony Machine behind the Roses Set (now using just the bass drum and one floor tom,) Buster Poindexter held a steady house gig at Tramps nightclub in Manhattan. In the late 1980s the band scored a major hit (and heavy MTV rotation) with their song "Hot! Hot! Hot!" Buster Poindexter and the Banshees of Blue built a cult following amongst Manhattan hipsters and their shows were regularly attended by New York's biggest stars. If you search on YouTube, you'll find a grainy 1984 video of Keith Richards and Delbert McClinton both joining Buster Poindexter onstage at Tramps with Tony Machine sitting behind the Roses Set. In the photos I've seen, the drums still looked to be in great shape.

At this point the history of the Roses Set gets murky. The set, now missing the rack tom, eventually found it's way to a dark corner of a Portland, Oregon bar where it was being used as the house kit for an open mic night. If you've ever seen a house kit in a rock bar, you know they take a lot of abuse from a revolving door of drummers hurriedly trying to adjust things in the few minutes between songs and bands. I think that's where the Roses set got so beat up.

Around 2010 a friend of mine sent me a link to a Craigslist ad in Vancouver, BC showing what appeared to be the Roses set. It was in really rough shape, but everything appeared to be correct. After several phone calls and emails, I eventually bought the set. I had to call in some favors from a couple of my Canadian drum buddies. First, Kyle Radomsky from Drumeo agreed to let the seller deliver it to their studio near Vancouver, then drum builder Ronn Dunnett agreed to pick it up at Drumeo and deliver it to me in Seattle, Washington while he was delivering a load of snare drums.


Shane Peck

The roses set before the roses courtesy of the Jerry Shirley photo collection

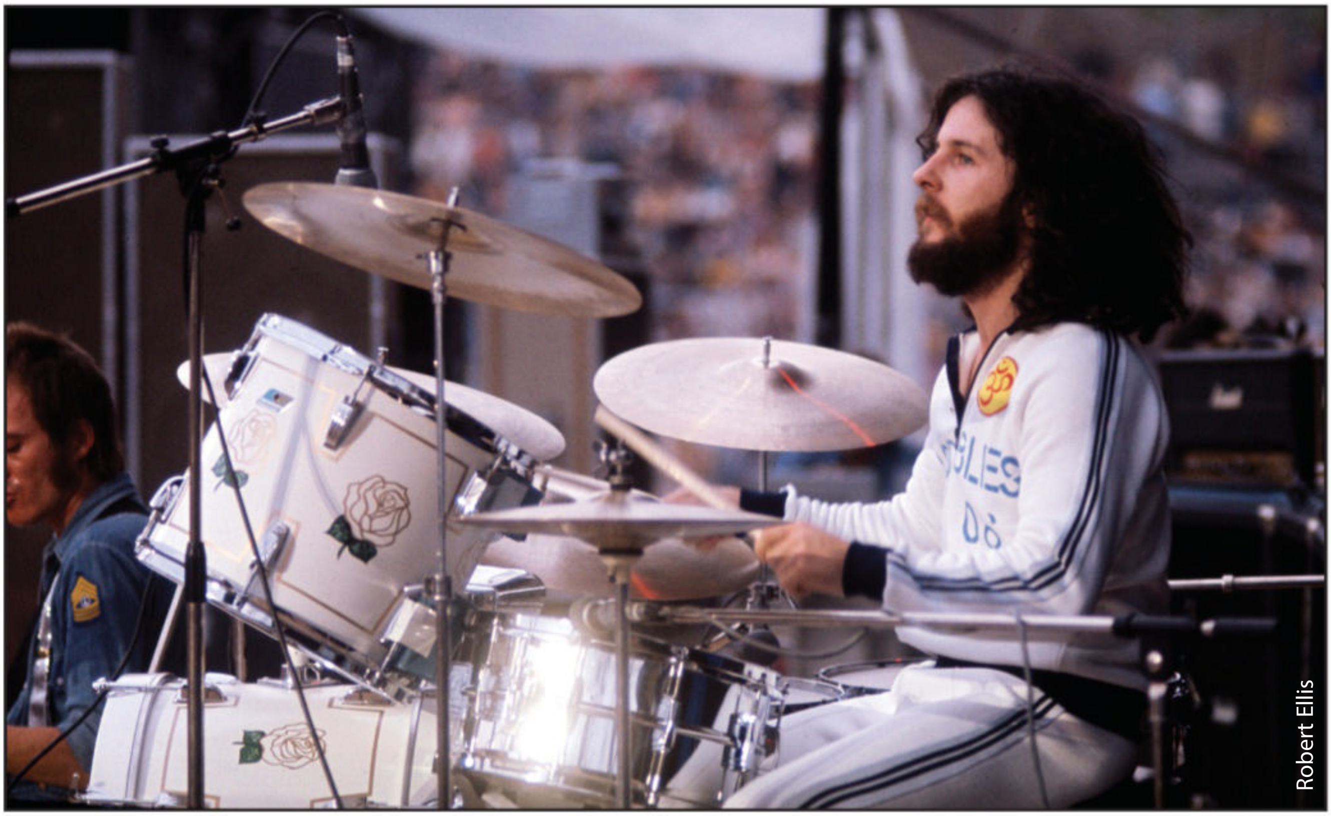
Initially my plan was to restore the set to it's original condition. I even tracked down Jerry Shirley on FaceBook and told him of my plans. He had seen photos of his set in it's current state and was saddened by the way it had been neglected. However, he was excited to see my restoration. Once I'd cleaned the set up (as much as I could,) I started looking for someone to restore the finish. Unfortunately, I soon found that the finish had deteriorated too far to restore. The only way to make it look like new was to strip the existing finish from the drum and start over. The end result would have been stunning, but the historian in me couldn't justify stripping that historic finish, no matter how badly deteriorated it was. The battle-scarred finish was actually growing on me. It looked kind of heroic, like it went through the hell of war but was still standing and ready for duty.

Enter plan "B." I decided to "relic" a new Ludwig 12x14" shell to look like the rest of the set. My pal Uli Salzar at Ludwig supplied me with a bare Legacy Maple shell and my dear friend, bandmate, and artist P.A. Mathison did an amazing job matching the finish to the original set. She also recreated the original Aubrey Beardsley graphic for the Humble Pie logo bass drum head. I absolutely loved the way it turned out.

The art of relic-ing has been popular for years in the guitar world. People pay a lot of money for new guitars that are made to look old and beat up. I predict you'll see the same thing happen in the drum world before too long. There are already companies like Joyful Noise and A&F Drums building beautiful new, yet old looking drums.

I sent Jerry Shirley photos of the completed set, looking forward to his excited response. That didn't happen! To say the least, Jerry was extremely unhappy and I felt like a first-class schmuck! He was appalled that an artist's talents were wasted recreating a hopelessly abused drum when the same talents could have been used to start over and restore the set to it's original beauty. I sent him a long apologetic email and was deeply honored by his response. He said because I was sincere and honest enough in my apology that he felt comfortable enough to share his feelings about this set, and why seeing it's current condition was difficult for him. He went on to say that the set was a tribute to his father who was also a drummer and had a white 1930s Premier drum set with gold pin striping. His father was a master gardener and grew prized roses. The gold stripes and the roses design paid tribute to his father who had since passed and had been a great inspiration and supporter of Jerry's drumming.

I also asked Jerry Shirley about tuning his drums for his huge Humble Pie sound, he replied, "The secret to those big old 26" bass drums is all in the tuning and the beater. I used a Speed King with an extended arm that was long enough to hit the drum dead center. I hit hard, especially on the bass drum. I never rested my foot on the pedal. I was forever stomping on it, "dancing on it" (if you like,) rather than resting my heel on the bottom of the foot plate. This meant my foot was landing on the pedal from some height. I also had the beater set up so that it was as far back from the skin as possible, so it had a long way to travel to hit the drum with maximum velocity. The beater was so far back that it was parallel with the ground, meaning it was completely horizontal. The beater itself was felt, both front and back skins were tuned as low as they could possibly be without wrinkles appearing, plus there was no hole in the front skin. I used two felt damping strips on each skin front and back. They were placed about halfway between the center of the drum and the far edge of each side, straight up and down in the vertical position. Once I had hit the drum, I let the beater come back all the way, imagine a karate kick or a fast boxer jabbing, that's how I got it to sound so loud and deep. I was known for how loud I played, and that kit was a big part of it. The rest of the kit was tuned as low as possible too. The bottom skins were tuned higher than the top, so the toms had a deep after tone and not a high ping. The snare was tuned very high. The top head was tuned high, so it had a loud crack to it, and the bottom head was tuned higher than the top."


Robert Ellis

In life, and in drumming, a little honest communication goes a long way. After his initial displeasure regarding this set's restoration, Jerry and I could have easily traded insults and written each other off. Instead, we've become great internet pals and discovered we are extremely like-minded on a wide range of topics. We're also scheming about a new project involving his legendary Roses Set. I should have more to tell you about that in one of my upcoming columns.

MODERN DRUMMER Media Presents: Lessons From The Greats

The Joe Morello Collection

Master Studies
by Joe Morello
Exercises For The Development Of Control And Technique
MODERN DRUMMER Publications
Master Studies II
by Joe Morello
More Exercises For The Development Of Control And Technique
MODERN DRUMMER Presents
Rudimental JAZZ
A MUSICAL APPLICATION OF RUDIMENTS TO THE DRUMSET
JOE MORELLO

Master Studies
This book focuses on these important aspects: accent studies, buzz-roll exercises, single and double-stroke patterns, control studies, flam patterns, dynamic development, endurance studies, and much more!

Master Studies II
Like Master Studies, this is a workbook of material to use in developing the hands for drumming. Challenging exercises encourage students to learn slow, sensible and accurate practice techniques.

Rudimental Jazz
The precursor to his two most widely used instructional books – Master Studies and Master Studies II – this book covers: techniques such as right and left hand grips, playing position, striking the snare drum & hi-hat and more; beginning exercises; drum beats; teacher's charts; graphic cutouts and more.

Available In Print and Digital Format

BUY FROM YOUR FAVORITE MUSIC RETAILER
CHECK OUT MORE AT MODERNDRUMMER.COM

OUT NOW!

Phil Seamen:

Percussion Genius, Legendary Rebel, and Born Raver By Peter Dawn

Story by Mark Griffith

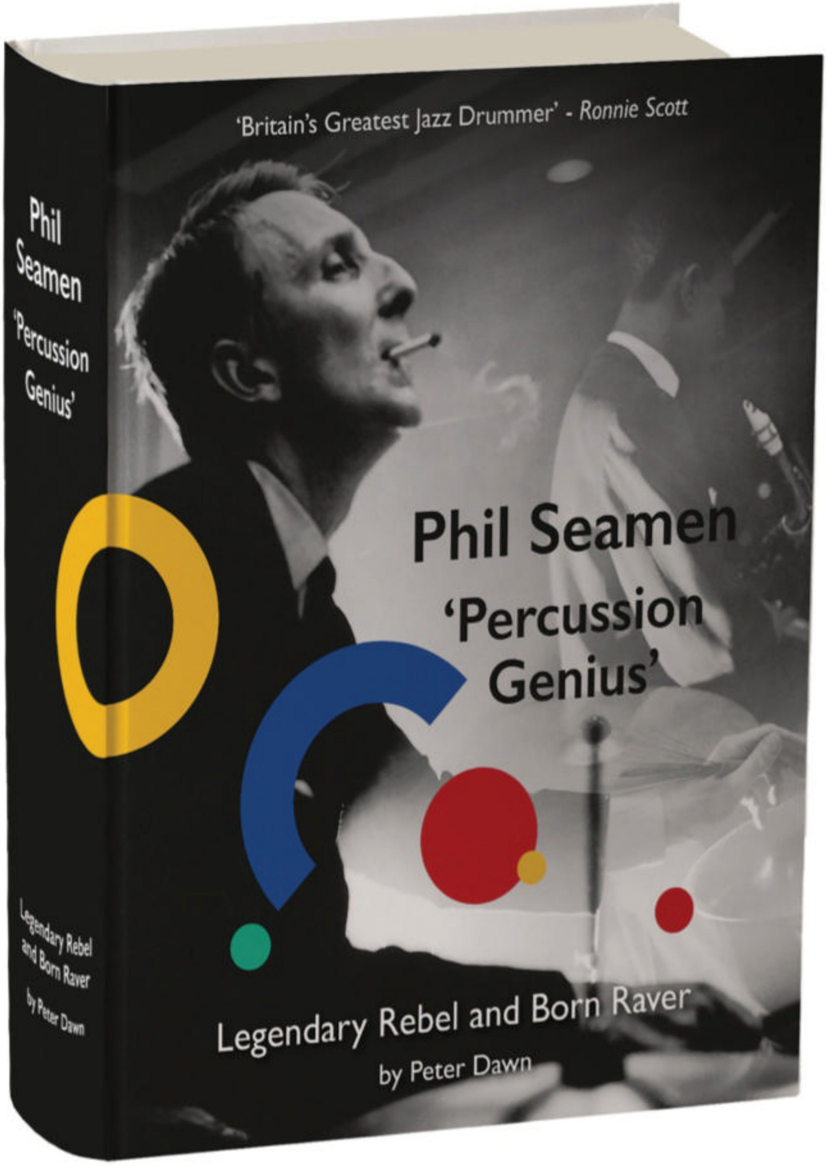
One day in late 2022, my phone rang, it was drum industry stalwart John DeChristopher telling me that fellow drum industry vet Colin Schofield was trying to get in touch with me. I emailed Colin only to learn about a brand new book and an author that (according to Colin,) I should know about. If it was good enough for Colin and Johnny D, it deserved a close look. The subject of the book was Phil Seamen, and the author was Peter Dawn. A few weeks later the book arrived, and I started reading!

Even amongst some drummers, Phil Seamen is not a household name, but he should be. He is the patriarch of the British drumset tradition. His place in the annals of British modern jazz is paralleled only by the legendary saxophonist (and club owner) Ronnie Scott. Throughout the years, Seamen's praises have been sung by everyone from Ginger Baker, to Carl Palmer, to Charlie Watts, and beyond. However, very little was known about Phil, his life, his career, or his many recordings… Until now!

Enter author Peter Dawn. Peter grew up in the same town as Phil, he went to the same school, and he walked the same streets. Peter is an avid record collector, music lover. In his years working in law, psychology, and human resources, he has become a master interviewer and researcher. After retiring, Peter turned his finely tuned communication skills and his love of music towards the subject of Phil Seamen. For years there had been rumors in Burton on Trent about someone writing a biography on Phil, with the aim of shedding some light on this supremely talented yet tragic figure of the British jazz scene. Today, the mystery is over, and the book has arrived.

Peter Dawn's new book *Phil Seamen: Percussion Genius, Legendary Rebel, and Born Raver,* has done much more than "shed some light" on Phil. The book details his entire life in painstaking detail. In the 600 plus pages, we learn precisely what made Phil tick. Peter explores all aspects of Seamen's musical career, drumming genius, personal life, and his tragic demise that was shrouded in mystery. There could not be a more entertaining story to tell.

This book deserved much more than a review. I wanted to go directly to the source and find out how and why this book was made. I wanted to know why it took so long for someone to grab the reins of Phil Seamen's life and squeeze it between the covers of a book. After reading the book, I wanted to learn even more about Phil, if that was indeed possible. It was.


'Britain's Greatest Jazz Drummer' - Ronnie Scott
Phil Seamen 'Percussion Genius'
Phil Seamen
'Percussion Genius'
Legendary Rebel and Born Raver
by Peter Dawn

MD: What was the inspiration behind writing this book?
PD: There had been rumors for many years that someone was writing a book on Phil's life, but nothing ever materialized. In 2006 I started by tracing Phil's musical career through collecting mainly vinyl recordings of his work as a sideman. It took about five years to find around 100 recordings as some are quite rare. After I compiled a draft discography, I started seeing the names of the different musicians that he had played with, I found the ones who were still alive, and I started interviewing them in 2011. All told, I interviewed about 240 people for the book.

I grew up about a mile away from where Phil was raised and lived, I saw him play once at a club called the Eight Bar Rest in our hometown of Burton on Trent. When Phil was in the club, a ripple of excitement would go around that "Phil is here." I already knew many of the local semi-professional musicians that Phil came up and had worked with him early on, I started by interviewing them. When I started to interview the professionals that he worked with in London, I started to learn about his far-reaching musical and drumming influence. I interviewed Chris Welch who was the Features Editor for *Melody Maker*. Chris knew Phil and had interviewed him several times for *Melody Maker*. Chris later agreed to be my editor for the book. I also interviewed Michael Baird (a drummer from Holland, not the LA drummer of the same name) who had written the booklet for the CD *The Late Great Phil Seamen,* that he put out on his SWP label. It was Michael who told me about the African rhythms that Phil had built into his drumming. Interviewing Chris and Michael was when I really knew that this was an important subject.

Then I moved on to the more well-known musicians that Phil had worked with, starting with legendary names like Stan Tracey, Tony Kinsey, and Don Rendell. I found a promoter from Manchester named Ernie Garside that had known Phil. Josie Barber (Ronnie Scott's niece,) who Phil got engaged to and Leonie Craven who Phil married, both agreed to be interviewed. I discovered that the British Library had interviews on reel-to-reel tape with musicians who had died, such as Ronnie Scott, Kenny Clarke, Joe Harriott and Jack Parnell. Those recordings hadn't seen the light of day for over forty years, and they were digitalized for me. I quickly learned of the reverence that surrounded Phil. So many people and musicians wanted to talk to me about Phil, and they all seemed relieved that someone was finally researching Phil's life and was going to tell his story.
MD: Were you prepared for the surprises that Phil's story provided, and the trials and tribulations that he went through?
PD: When you are interviewing people, you have to learn the fine art of *shutting up*. You get the real gems after those pregnant pauses, and through just letting people speak. You seem to do that very well. I didn't know anything about the drug side of things, that was a complete surprise. I was also unaware that many of the musicians in Phil's time were Scottish, and many of them also happened to be Jewish. Although Phil wasn't Jewish, the antisemitism of the day had an unfortunate effect on Phil's life, and that subject intersected with his drug use.
MD: So many drummers revere Phil Seamen, what drummers did you interview about Phil?
PD: Rod Brown studied with Phil when he was 18, and he gave me exercises that Phil wrote out and he wrote out other drum exercises that Phil had taught him. Geoff Moss who now lives in France did the same. These exercises are included in the drumming chapter, as are some exercises that Phil taught Ginger Baker. Ronnie Parry was a contemporary of Phil's and we talked quite a bit, I also interviewed Tommy Chase who was very forthcoming. Jon Hiseman and I spent five hours talking about Phil about three months before Jon died. I also interviewed John Marshall. John and Geoff Nicholls actually edited and proofed the drumming chapter just to be sure everything was correct.

Charlie Watts and I spoke extensively about Phil, Charlie adored and idolized him. Charlie actually wrote the Foreword of the book and let me include a drawing of Phil that Charlie created when he heard that Phil died. It was Charlie who arranged my interview with Ginger Baker, and Ginger and I talked for about three hours at his house down in Canterbury.
MD: Jon Hiseman, John Marshall, and (of course) Charlie Watts, those are legendary drummers. How did your

Throughout the years, Seamen's praises have been sung by everyone from Ginger Baker, to Carl Palmer, to Charlie Watts, and beyond. However, very little was known about Phil, his life, his career, or his many recordings… Until now!

interview with Ginger go?

PD: I knew he had the reputation of being a bit prickly. He had done the interview for the movie *Beware of Mr. Baker* about three months before we talked. Before I interviewed Ginger, I asked Chris Welch for some advice. He told me that I knew my subject, and to stick to it. He told me to only ask Ginger questions about Phil, and if I did, I would be OK. About a half hour into our interview, Ginger smiled and said, *"I'm actually enjoying this."* After that he really opened up, we got along very well, and the interview went great. Ginger was going to write the Foreword for the book, but he died before he could put pen to paper. That is when Charlie agreed to write the Foreword.

> About a half hour into our interview, Ginger smiled and said, "I'm actually enjoying this." After that he really opened up, we got along very well, and the interview went great.

MD: What did Charlie Watts tell you about Phil? Charlie and I spoke once or twice about Phil, and I can still remember the sparkle in his eye when he talked about him.

PD: Phil was Charlie Watts' hero. The first time that Charlie got his passport and travelled abroad, he went to Paris to hear Phil play at the Blue Note. *That* was the reason he got his first passport. Charlie told me that Phil influenced an entire generation of British drummers. According to Charlie, Phil was the first drummer in England of any standing to use the matched grip on the drumset exclusively. John Marshall told me how Phil popularized the matched grip, and as rock and roll became popular in England, many of the rock drummers latched on to that grip while most of the jazz drummers were still using the traditional grip. Then when the British rock drummers got to the States, American drummers saw the matched grip that Phil had used and had been adopted by the British rock drummers and adopted it for themselves. Is that something that you would agree with?

MD: I do know that American jazz drummer Tiny Kahn was using the matched grip very early on as well. As to who was first Phil or Tiny? I don't know. I know Phil started playing drums professionally in 1946 in England, and Tiny started professionally in 1948 in New York. There are many lessons and revelations in your book. What was your biggest takeaway from writing the book?

PD: Ultimately, it was a waste of talent. God gave Phil an abundance of talent, and in the end, he knew that he had blown it. Phil enjoyed himself and he didn't compromise. Phil's one ambition was to become a drummer, and he loved making people happy with his music. He achieved both things.

With so many musicians, all you can talk about with them is their music, but Phil was much more than that. He had a natural wit, he led an outrageous lifestyle, he was a born rebel, but people respected him. There is also a beautiful, yet sad, love story in Phil's life, and in the end, there was a tragic accident too. The accident contributed towards his death. There has always been some mystery surrounding his death.

> There hasn't been much written about the post-war music scene in Britain. People start talking about English music in the late 50s with Skiffle and rock and roll.

MD: Phil's story is simply fascinating. Do you think there might be a movie adaptation? It's got a little bit of everything!

PD: There has been some talk about that. When Phil was alive, he was approached by Gordon Williams who wrote a book called *The Siege of Trencher's Farm*. They made it into a film called *Straw Dogs*. An American film maker wanted Gordon to write Phil's life story so that he could turn it into a film.

I believe that the fact that someone had actually asked Phil about his life story was the spark behind the recording of the rare LP *The Phil Seamen Story*. But Phil didn't want to do a film until after his parents had died, and unfortunately Phil died before his parents, so nothing ever came of it.

There hasn't been much written about the post-war music scene in Britain. People start talking about English music in the late 50s with Skiffle and rock and roll. But Phil's story is also a picture of the music scene and the jazz musicians after the war, and how those musicians and that scene contributed to the beginning of rock and roll in the 60s.

MD: That is another very intersting aspect to your book, that is an ignored part of music history. This is a riveting book, and a spellbinding tale of drumming and music history from an era of music that is rarely discussed. From my own listening and previous research, Phil Seamen was a great drummer, and an intriguing human being, I'm so glad you wrote this. *Phil Seamen: Percussion Genius, Legendary Rebel, and Born Raver* is a book that many drummers will enjoy. While they are enjoying Phil's story, they will also learn a great deal about drumming and life. It is one of the best biographies about a musician that I have ever read.

PD: Thank you very much.

Peter has self-published the book. He has also had remastered over 100 recordings that Phil played on that are available for download. For more information and to buy the book, go to: ***philseamen.com*** *Peter can be contacted at* ***peter@peterdawn.co.uk***

MODERN DRUMMER®

+

CONSEQUENCE

A new era of Modern Drummer is upon us, with an updated return to print, a refreshed website, a new membership program, and more!

As of January 1st, 2023, Modern Drummer is under new management, having merged with Consequence Media. In the short term, we will be publishing print issues on a bi-monthly basis beginning in February 2023. From there, we will relaunch Modern Drummer's website with an easy-to-navigate archive, exclusive features, and other premium content, while also working towards creating a more premium print product.

As an existing annual active subscriber (print+digital), you will automatically receive a one-year subscription to Modern Drummer's revamped All Access program (a $340 value) — free of charge. It's our gift to you, a gesture to show our commitment to Modern Drummer and the readers who've read it page-to-page over the last 47 years.

Modern Drummer All Access includes:

- Digital Subscription
- 6 physical copies of Modern Drummer, sent bi-monthly
- Access to exclusive giveaways and meet and greets
- Modern Drummer t-shirt and hat
- Modern Drummer Masterclass
- And even more to be announced in the months ahead

The newest print issue of Modern Drummer (January/February 2023) will be shipped by March 15th, with subsequent issues shipping bi-monthly. Modern Drummer will continue to publish a new digital issue monthly on the first of each month.

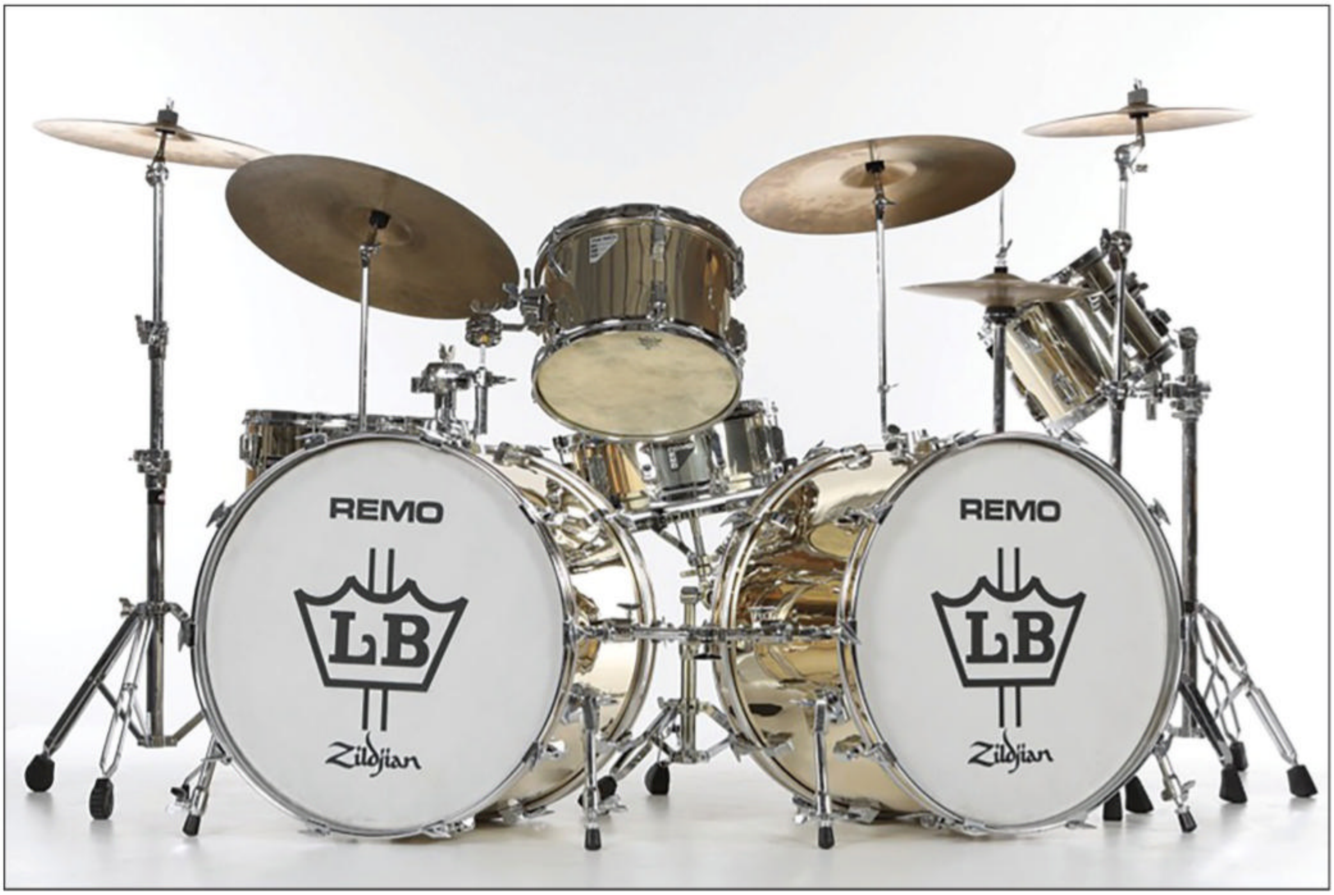
Your exclusive Modern Drummer shirt or hat will start shipping by March 15. We have a limited supply of MD merchandise and shipments that will be released as new inventory is available in the upcoming months.

Thank you, and we look forward to showing you all of the exciting things to come. If you have any questions regarding your subscription please send us an email to info@moderndrummer.com.

David Frangioni

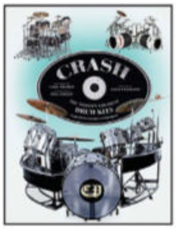
— David Frangioni
CEO, Modern Drummer Publications

Rogers 1960s Gold Louie Bellson and Sammy Davis Jr. Kit



This Rogers kit was originally owned and used by Louie Bellson in the 1960s. Noted drum historian and drum shop owner Steve Maxwell once owned the kit, and he provides the following description: the kit features two 14X24 bass drums, a 9X13 tom, two 16X16 floor toms, a 5X14 Rogers Dynasonic snare drum, and a canister throne. All the drum hardware as well as the brass shell of the snare drum is entirely gold plated. The bass drums have the original Louie Bellson logo front heads. The bass drums also feature a gold-plated metal plate with Louie's signature; the set is complete with all the original Rogers gold plated hardware, as well as all of Louie's original cymbals.

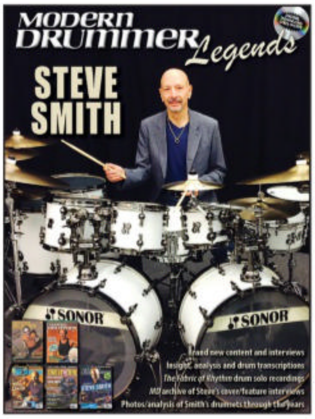
"Louie Bellson was one of Sammy Davis Jr.'s favorite drummers and they had a close friendship for many years. Sammy was an excellent drummer himself, and as a gesture of friendship, Louie loaned this set to Sammy. Being owned and used extensively by Louie Bellson makes it a fantastic collector's piece. But the fact that it was also played by Sammy Davis Jr. raises it to one-of-a-kind iconic status."



This comes from the book *Crash: The World's Greatest Drum Kits,* available at **moderndrummer.com**

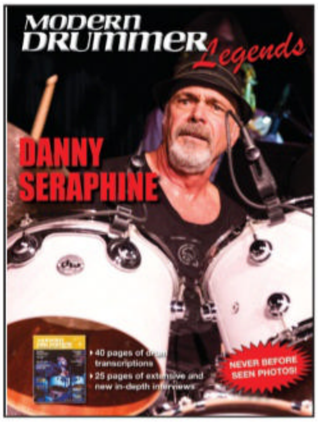
MODERN DRUMMER Media Presents:

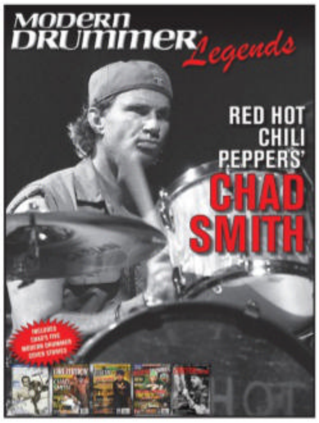
The Legends Collection

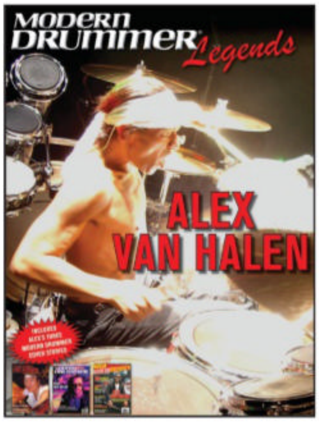

MODERN DRUMMER Legends
STEVE SMITH

MODERN DRUMMER Legends
PETER ERSKINE

MODERN DRUMMER Legends
KENNY ARONOFF


MODERN DRUMMER Legends
DANNY SERAPHINE
NEVER BEFORE SEEN PHOTOS!


MODERN DRUMMER Legends
RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS'
CHAD SMITH


MODERN DRUMMER Legends
ALEX VAN HALEN

MODERN DRUMMER Legends
RUSH'S
NEIL PEART
AN ANTHOLOGY OF NEIL'S MODERN DRUMMER COVER STORIES

Not just another drum book or magazine, It's *Modern Drummer* Legends!

Extensive And New In-depth Interviews ▪ Artist Approved Content

New Song Transcriptions With Artist Insight

Never Before Seen Photos ▪ Digital Download components

Legends Coming Soon:

Billy Cobham ▪ Carmine Appice ▪ Gavin Harrison ▪ Giovanni Hidalgo ▪ Carl Palmer

Cindy Blackman Santana ▪ Dave Weckl ▪ Charlie Watts ▪ Eric Singer ▪ Alex González

Buy from your favorite music retailer Check out more at moderndrummer.com/legends

DOMINION

ddrum unveils the upgraded Dominion Birch Series, with reimagined shell-pack configurations, new hardware, and eye-catching finishes. The Dominion Birch Series unites the tonal dynamics of classic birch shells with cutting-edge design, and a splash of sophistication, to bring this popular drum series to a new level of performance and appearance. Available in several different configurations and color options, the Dominion Birch Series offers players of any genre a strong foundation for sound quality and the utmost style to let their drumming personality shine.

Musician's Friend Guitar Center

Available Online & Select Guitar Center Locations

@ddrumusa